

Inspiring Thoughts for Challenging Times

**A Bouquet of Wisdom Gifts
Given in Love**

*Volume
Two*

An Anthology

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Introduction

In these challenging times, many of us find comfort and support in the inspiring teachings of the wise ones from all times and places. Having collected and been uplifted by such writings for over three decades now, I recently I felt moved to put together this collection of quotes—short supportive reminders to empower our highest vision for ourselves, humanity and Mother Earth. That became volume one of this series, with new additions presented in volume two. I hope you will find them inspiring and uplifting on your life journey.

Many of the flowers in this *Bouquet of Wisdom Gifts Given In Love* came from *Ispirit.org* which offers a daily email with an uplifting quote. If you wish to receive them, go to their site, click “contact” at the top, then check “Daily Inspiration Emails.”

Please let me know your thoughts on this book. And do please share some of your favorite quotes for Volume Three.

dan
April 2, 2026

*Your task is not to seek
for love, but merely to
seek and find all the
barriers within yourself
that you have built against it.*

Rumi

If you want to fly, you have to give up what weighs you down.

— *Roy T. Bennett*

Change is your friend not your foe; change is a brilliant opportunity to grow.

— *Simon T. Bailey*

When you learn, teach. When you get, give."

— *Maya Angelou*

The way I see it, if you want the rainbows, you gotta put up with the rain.

— *Dolly Parton*

Today, if we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other—that man, that woman, that child is my brother or my sister. If everyone could see the image of God in his neighbor, do you think we would still need tanks and generals?

—*Mother Theresa, Love: A Fruit Always in Season*

There are no hopeless situations, only people who are hopeless about them.

— *Dinah Shore*

We must love our enemies because hate, or rather because love has within its very power transforming qualities. And we notice hate and think about it. Hate serves to destroy. Love serves to build up. Hate seeks destructive ends. Love seeks constructive ends. Hate seeks to annihilate. Love seeks to convert. Hate seeks to live in monologue. Love seeks to live in dialogue. And it is only through love that we are able to redeem and transform the enemy neighbor.

—*Martin Luther King Jr.*
Loving Your Enemies Sermon

Compassion is a verb.

—*Thich Nhat Hanh*

Knowing the truth doesn't mean anything. It's acting on it that changes the world.

—*Author Unknown*

Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive.

—*Dalai Lama XIV, The Art of Happiness*

Whatever the ultimate fate of my country, my love for you remains, and will remain, undiminished. My non-violence demands universal love, and you are not a small part of it. It is that love which has prompted my appeal to you. May God give power to every word of mine. In his name I began to write this, and in His name I close it. May your statesman have the wisdom and courage to respond to my appeal.

—*Mahatma Gandhi*

Open letter, "To Every Briton," 1940

Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace.

—*Albert Schweitzer*

I used to wish that I could see pictures with my hands as I do statues, but now I do not often think about it because my dear Father has filled my mind with beautiful pictures, even of things I cannot see. If the light were not in your eyes,... you would understand better how happy your little Helen was when her teacher explained to her that the best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen nor even touched, but just felt in the heart. Every day I find out something which makes me glad.

—*Hellen Keller The Story of My Life*
(speaking of her teacher Anne Sullivan),

Hope is a motion of the heart fastened with courage not a feeling or idea but a choice. A choice not to suffer the shortness of sight, that is despair. A choice to live in harmony with time, for time is tenacious and never finished, and in its peaceful labours, far more prodigious, than us at imagining the next great astonishment.

— *Maria Popova*

I am learning to live and move and have my being in the eye of the storm because a person at peace is a portal.

— *Carrie Murray*

The world is neither a finished abode nor a meaningless turbulence; it is a chrysalis-like realm whose purpose is illumination. The gradations of experience – joy and sorrow, ease and trial, clarity and confusion – form the stages through which the soul prepares for realms where forms are more refined and realities more transparent. The caterpillar must dissolve to become a butterfly; likewise, the self must pass through states of unmaking and remaking to ascend toward truth. Crisis, in this metaphysical horizon, is not evidence of abandonment but of design: the world is shaped to transform us, not to spare us from transformation.

— *Sabahat Fida*, Beshara Magazine

The world is run by men who love to shout. It is saved by people who know how to listen.

— *Author Unknown*

Sufi teacher Llewellyn Vaughn-Lee contrasts AI's reliance on the stale data of the past with the timeless awareness of the awakened heart, and argues that real transformation arises from inner stillness, love, and reconnection with Earth, not technology.

— From *AI & Spiritual Life*:| A Simple Reflection
in Kosmos Journal

One of the most important gifts a parent can give a child is the gift of accepting that child's uniqueness. When I was a boy, and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.' To this day, especially in times of "disaster," I remember my mother's words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in this world

—*Fred Rogers*

A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood:
The Poetry of Mister Rogers

I think... if it is true that there are as many minds as there are heads, then there are as many kinds of love as there are hearts.

—*Leo Tolstoy*

Anna Karenina

And if we dare to look into those eyes, then we shall feel their suffering in our hearts. More and more people have seen that appeal and felt it in their hearts. All around the world there is an awakening of understanding and compassion, and understanding that reaches out to help the suffering animals in their vanishing homelands. That embraces hungry, sick, and desperate human beings, people who are starving while the fortunate among us have so much more than we need. And if, one by one, we help them, the hurting animals, the desperate humans, then together we shall alleviate so much of the hunger, fear, and pain in the world. Together we can bring change to the world, gradually replacing fear and hatred with compassion and love. Love for all living beings.

—*Jane Goodall*

No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world.

— *Robin Williams*

Even when we think we have nothing left to give, love finds a way. Even when our own lives are falling apart, we can still choose to be someone else's light in the darkness. Even when we're struggling just to survive, we can still choose to be the person who stops, who cares, who helps, who chooses love over fear, kindness over convenience, and hope over despair. And if you've ever wondered whether your small acts of kindness matter, whether the help you offer when you can barely help yourself makes a difference, remember that every act of love creates ripples we may never see, touches lives we may never know about, and changes the world in ways both small and profound. Because in the end, we're all just walking each other home.

— *Author Unknown*

I always knew that deep down in every human heart, there is mercy and generosity. No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite. Even in the grimmest times in prison, when my comrades and I were pushed to our limits, I would see a glimmer of humanity in one of the guards, perhaps just for a second, but it was enough to reassure me and keep me going. Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished

— *Nelson Mandela*
Long Walk to Freedom

We do not need to bring our real self, our higher self, into existence. It is already there. It has always been there, yearning to be out. An incomparable spark of divinity is to be found in the heart of each human being, waiting to radiate love and wisdom everywhere, because that is its nature.

— *Ekknath Easwaran*
God Makes the Rivers To Flow

Kindness. Isn't just helping others. It's about staying open to grace, to possibility, to the unexpected ways that compassion can circle back and transform everything.

— *Author Unknown*

In 2004, Terry Tempest Williams—a brilliant diagnostician of the American condition—told us why we need to pay attention to the dynamics of our own hearts if we want our democracy to thrive: “The human heart is the first home of democracy. It is where we embrace our questions. Can we be equitable? Can we be generous? Can we listen with our whole beings, not just our minds, and offer our attention rather than our opinions? And do we have enough resolve in our hearts to act courageously, relentlessly, without giving up—ever—trusting our fellow citizens to join with us in our determined pursuit of a living democracy?”

—*Terry Tempest Williams*

The Open Space of Democracy

I love the fact that Williams does not name an historic event, document, person or place as “the first home” of democracy. Instead, she says the buck stops here, with us: democracy originates in our hearts, whose impulses drive everything we do, for better and worse. She does not say that our hearts always yearn for love, truth and justice, because that's not true. The evils of the Third Reich originated in the heart, as did the flawed but noble experiment called the U.S.A. Williams gets it right: the heart is where our better angels and lesser angels duke it out, and much depends on which one emerges victorious.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

And today I ask, “What do I love enough to keep working toward, what cherished values do I pledge my heart?” And “How do I best live into what I love each day”

— *Carrie Newcomer*

It's difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams, and cherished hopes rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart. I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness, I hear the ever approaching thunder, which will destroy us too, I can feel the sufferings of millions, and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty too will end, and that peace and tranquility will return again.

— *Anne Frank*
The Diary of a Young Girl

What I learned in deep conflict: To survive, people must learn to human together better. Facing fear, fragility, and fragmentation will take courage and creativity. It will require gentle ways to wield the crude and gentle tools of being human. Over the past four decades my wandering in places of deep violence, rampant injustice, and daily fragility taught me to watch and learn from people who, against the odds, flourished with their dignity and imagination intact. Intact (v): Living whole while wounded; fully alive.

— *John Paul Lederach*
The Centuries Wrapped Round Us

I will never apologize for embracing joy and beauty—even when the world is falling apart—because joy and beauty are my fuel for activism.

— *Karen Walrond*,
The Lightmaker's Manifesto

It is more rewarding to watch money change the world than watch it accumulate.

— *Gloria Steinem*

Happiness is made by what we do: by the love we give and the meaning we make.

— *Rabbi Jonathan Sacks*
The Two Kinds of Joy

Lately, I've been deep into reading John Paul Lederach's luminous new book, *the centuries wrapped round us*. It is a beautiful collection of prose-poems that are presented like a winding path that is dotted with cairns of pondering, framed by his life long experience in peacemaking and conflict transformation, shaped through poetry and his connection to the natural world, and grounded in love that endures, imagines, sustains, and surprises you in its courage. I've been reading a bit each morning and it's been a beautiful thoughtful way to start my day.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Tenderness is the language of the young children, of those who need the other. A child's love for mom and dad grows through their touch, their gaze, their voice, their tenderness. I like when I hear parents talk to their babies, adapting to the little child, sharing the same level of communication. This is tenderness: being on the same level as the other....Yes, tenderness is the path of choice for the strongest, most courageous men and women. Tenderness is not weakness; it is fortitude. It is the path of solidarity, the path of humility.

— *Pope Francis*
Video Message on the Occasion of the
TED Conference in Vancouver, 2017

Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it.

— *Michael Jordan*

What John Paul calls “human-ing”... is love that arises from the messy business of being human and daring to become aware. We are living in a fragmented time and a technological culture that brokers in capturing and keeping our attention. We are confronted daily by the business plans and political playbooks that rely upon keeping us feeling isolated, dissociated, distracted and fractured personally and as a community. In the book there are several references to what changes when we become more awake to the power of connection—between one another as humans, between ourselves and the natural world, between ourselves and our own inner resources and between ourselves and an ancient Light that if not greater, is at least more vast and wild and more made of mercy than ourselves....with awareness comes possibility. With seeing comes a call to envision. With the stories of those who against all odds survived and flourished with their dignity and imagination intact we are encouraged to do likewise, to “create ourselves without creating an enemy.... I am called to connection, called to a sacred inner well, called to express what I find there with humility and courage. Called to do what I can to heal what feels broken in my life and in the world, but keep an open heart to what is learned in the process of brokenness.

And....I am called to human-ing—strong and fragile and honorable and full of regular blind curves and true love and understandable messiness.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Do not be content with showing friendship in words alone, let your heart burn with loving kindness for all who may cross your path.

— *Baha’u’llah*

In a gentle way, we can shake the world.

— *Gandhi*

I choose joy over despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy is what the earth gives me daily and I must return the gift.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

The medicine this sick world needs is love. Hatred must be replaced by love, and fear by faith that love will prevail.

— *Mildred L. Norman*

A mature person is one who does not think only in absolutes, who is able to be objective even when deeply stirred emotionally, who has learned that there is both good and bad in all people and in all things, and who walks humbly and deals charitably with the circumstances of life, knowing that in this world no one is all knowing and therefore all of us need both love and charity.

— *Eleanor Roosevelt*

It Seems to Me: Selected Letters

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair, but manifestations of strength and resolution.

— *Kahlil Gibran*

One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon -instead of enjoying the roses that are blooming outside our windows today.

— *Dale Carnegie*

Violence is what happens when we don't know what else to do with our suffering.

— *Parker J Palmer*

I find myself kneeling in the grass over and over, perhaps to come face to face with whatever it is that can never be told, yet always felt. Spring is not merely the time between an equinox and a solstice, it is any time when we struggle out of our night and dreams to walk, however unsure, in the light. In the course of a lifetime it can come at anytime. Grace knows no season. We can be born when we are old. Perhaps most of us are. Ultimately everything is metaphor, a seduction toward an open field and its hidden song.

— *The Journal of Samuel Martin*
The Almanac of the Soul

The world is changed by your example, not your opinion.

— *Paulo Coelho*

A soul is like electricity. We don't really know what it is, but it's a force that can light a room.

— *Ray Charles*

The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot.

— *Michael Altshuler*

All love is expansion, all selfishness is contraction. Love is therefore the only law of life. He who loves lives, he who is selfish is dying. Therefore love for love's sake, because it is law of life, just as you breathe to live.

— *Swami Vivekananda*

So long as the inner work is strong, the outer work will never be puny.

— *Meister Eckhart*

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

— *Eleanor Roosevelt*

If one is lucky, a solitary fantasy can totally transform one million realities."

— *Maya Angelou*

Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire.

— *Confucius*

I know cannot I cannot personally fix everything that is ailing this troubled country and world. I honestly deeply and powerfully wish I could, and so I lay my hand on my heart and feel it break a little bit each day for what I cannot personally change. But I am called by love to do what I can, change what I can, to be a part of the miracles that happen with daily faithful effort and imagination.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.

— Rabindranath Tagore

When you see something that is not just, not fair, or not right, you have to do something. You have to say something. Make a little noise. It's time for us to get into good trouble, necessary trouble.

— *John Lewis*

I know that peace, love, truth and justice, in their final and completed form will most likely not happen in my life time even though we may find our way a few steps closer toward that good and fine goal. I often think of something author and peace builder, John Paul Lederach, once said to me: "My work for a better more peaceful world must be the orientation of my life, not just the destination." I have held that idea close to my heart in these troubled times.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

At some point or another, we all have an inner conflict,... some situation where voices inside us are pointing two opposing directions. What to do?...The general advice is that the first answer that instinctively comes into your mind is the best one—but, there's such a strong tendency to second guess ourselves that people often reject their instinctive response, overthink it, rationalize it, justify it and end up deciding against their instincts, only to get it wrong! In other words, when that question comes up, what's your gut response?"

One of my working definitions of sincerity is embodying your inner voice. Initially, the major task is just learning the difference between the inner voice and its greatest impostor—the ego. It's helpful to have some information on the difference between the two: The inner voice doesn't justify itself. It doesn't speak in stories. It doesn't try to convince you of anything. It's just a felt sense of knowing. Deep inside you feel that voice. You intuit it. You know it like you know how important friendship is.

The ego rationalizes, analyzes, justifies, comes up with reason after reason—in short, it thinks about things. It's cognitive. Often, the ego speaks from a place of fear or craving. It might try to tell you that you can do it alone, that friendship doesn't matter much, that vulnerability should be avoided—stories!

Once you have a pretty solid understanding of the the difference between these two—not intellectually, but being able to know the difference in real time—then, the next major task is daring to actually enact what the inner voice is saying. Of course, this can be terrifying, but it's the work that must be done if we're to walk the Path of Sincerity.

— *David Sudar*

Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope.

— *Maya Angelou*

Doing good to others is not a duty. It is a joy, for it increases your own health and happiness.

— *Zoroaster*

Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them.

— *The 14th Dalai Lama*

Accustomed long to contemplating Love and Compassion, I have forgotten all the difference between myself and others.

— *Milarepa*

Compassion is the keen awareness of the interdependence of all things."

— *Thomas Merton*

It's not what you do, but who you become by what you do.

— *Anonymous*

I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.

— *Jimmy Dean*

A garden is a way that the land says, "I love you."...Gardens are simultaneously a material and a spiritual undertaking.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed."

— *Maya Angelou*

We become what we think about.

— *Earl Nightingale*

Whenever you bring your attention to anything natural, anything that has come into existence without human intervention, you step out of the prison of conceptualized thinking and, to some extent, participate in the state of connectedness with Being in which everything natural still exists. To bring your attention to a stone, a tree, or an animal does not mean to think about it, but simply to perceive it, to hold it in your awareness. Something of its essence then transmits itself to you. You can sense how still it is, and in doing so the same stillness arises within you. You sense how deeply it rests in Being—completely at one with what it is and where it is. In realizing this, you too come to a place of rest deep within yourself.

When you perceive nature only through the mind, through thinking, you cannot sense its aliveness, its beingness. You see the form only and are unaware of the life within the form—the sacred mystery.... When you perceive nature, let there be spaces of no thought, no mind. When you approach nature in this way, it will respond to you and participate in the evolution of human and planetary consciousness. You need nature as your teacher to help you reconnect with Being.

But not only do you need nature, it also needs you. When you recognize the sacredness, the beauty, the incredible stillness and dignity in which a flower or a tree exists, you add something to the flower or the tree. Through your recognition, your awareness, nature too comes to know itself. Nature can bring you to stillness. That is its gift to you. When you perceive and join with nature in the field of stillness, that field becomes permeated with your awareness. That is your gift to nature. A great silent space holds all of nature in its embrace. It also holds you.

— *Eckhart Tolle*

Love is the bridge between you and everything.

— *Rumi*

Gratitude is so much more than a polite “thank you.” It is the thread that connects us in a deep relationship, simultaneously physical and spiritual, as our bodies are fed and spirits nourished by the sense of belonging, which is the most vital of foods. Gratitude creates a sense of abundance, the knowing that you have what you need. In that climate of sufficiency, our hunger for more abates and we take only what we need, in respect for the generosity of the giver.

If our first response is gratitude, then our second is reciprocity: to give a gift in return....Gratitude and reciprocity are the currency of a gift economy, and they have the remarkable property of multiplying with every exchange, their energy concentrating as they pass from hand to hand, a truly renewable resource.... To name the world as gift is to feel one’s membership in the web of reciprocity. It makes you happy—and it makes you accountable. Conceiving of something as a gift changes your relationship to it in a profound way, even though the physical makeup of the “thing” has not changed.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.

— *Christopher Robin to Pooh*

If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain; If I can ease one life the aching, or cool one pain, or help one fainting robin up to his nest again, I shall not live in vain.

— *Emily Dickinson*

The best revenge is to be unlike those who performed the injury.

— *Marcus Aurelius*

Sadness is but a wall between two gardens.

— *Khalil Gibran*

When we identify where our privilege intersects with somebody else's oppression, we'll find our opportunities to make real change.

— *Ijeoma Oluo*

When Florida Scott-Maxwell was eighty-five, she wrote, "You need only claim the events of your life to make yourself yours. When you truly possess all you have been and done...you are fierce with reality." That's how I feel when I'm able to say, "I am that to which I gave short shrift and that to which I attended. I am my descent into darkness and my arising into light, my betrayals and my fidelities, my failures and my successes. I am my ignorance and my insights, my doubts and my convictions, my fears and my hopes." Wholeness does not mean perfection—it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life.

— *Parker J Palmer*

[A mother wrote that her young daughter] "approaches the world with only one giant, indiscriminate expectation: delight me." I [too] want to approach the world with only one expectation as I stand on the brink of everything. At age 86, I'm old enough to know that the world can delight me, so my expectation is not of the world but of myself: Delight in the gift of life and pass it forward every day in acts of love, truth, and justice.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

In an existence where we belong to the Universe, where we are part of it and viscerally experience our relatedness, our kinship with All There Is, we are woven together with all of Life. Through the lens of this sacred unity, nothing is alien, nothing is untethered. Through the ropes of relating, we have access to all the information in the universe: in-formation. Information is energy in formation.

— *Natureza Gabriel*
Kosmos Journal

...the universal language beneath all other languages [is] the language of the heart. To ask questions rather than provide answers. To tell stories rather than to make arguments. To empathize rather than to persuade. To hold space for evolution rather than to try to force change.

— *Charles Eisenstein*

I get up and reflect upon “what is mine to do” and ask “where are the connections and community that supports what I cherish.”

— *Carrie Newcomer*

It is the consciousness with which we engage something that determines whether it furthers evolution or hinders it

— *Rudolph Steiner*

As ever, we have before us the hard work of healing, all down the line of our ancestors and on up into the branching world tree of our as-yet un-mapped possibilities, which bloom forth in interlocking geometries of infinite depth and resonance, only to recede again as faintly whispered invitations for our hearts to follow as we seek pathways toward greater freedom, pathways beyond fear.

— *Austin R. Pick*

The Fractured Fractal:
Meaning Making in the
Psychedelic Multiverse

We live a double life, civilized in scientific and technical matters, wild and primitive in the things of the soul. That we are no longer conscious of being primitive, makes our tamed kind of wildness all the more dangerous.

— *Hans Von Hentig*

None of the problems facing humanity today are technically difficult to solve. Holistic farming methods could heal soil and water, sequester carbon, increase biodiversity, and actually increase yields to swiftly solve various ecological and humanitarian crises. Simply declaring a moratorium on fishing in half the world's oceans would heal them too. Systemic use of natural and alternative healing modalities could vastly reduce Covid mortality, and reverse the (objectively more serious) plagues of autoimmunity, allergies, and addiction. New economic arrangements could easily eradicate poverty. However, what all of these easy solutions have in common is that they require agreement among human beings. There is almost no limit to what a unified, coherent society can achieve. That is why the overarching crisis of our time—more serious than ecological collapse, more serious than economic collapse, more serious than the pandemic—is the polarization and fragmentation of civil society. With coherency, anything is possible. Without it, nothing is.

— *Charles Eisenstein*

Empathy is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another, and feeling with the heart of another.

— *Alfred Adler*

I think sometimes, when you're trying to do justice work, when you're trying to make a difference, when you're trying to change the world, the thing you need to do is get close enough to people who are falling down, get close enough to people who are suffering, close enough to people who are in pain, who've been discarded and disfavored—to get close enough to wrap your arms around them and affirm their humanity and their dignity.

— *Bryan Stevenson*

Falling isn't failing, it's just learning to rise.

— *Author Unknown*

Do it! What are you waiting on? Do it! Stand up for what you believe in. The world needs your voice. Whoever you are, you have something to say. Say it.

— *Kerry Washington*

The measure of wealth is not in what you can buy, but in what you are willing to give.

— *Author Unknown*

When you have the opportunity and the ability to do good and you do nothing, that's evil. Evil doesn't always have to be an overt act, it can be merely the absence of good.

— *Yvon Chouinard*

When we are mired in the relative world, never lifting our gaze to the mystery, our life is stunted, incomplete; we are filled with yearning for that paradise that is lost when, as young children, we replace with words and ideas and abstractions—such as merit, such as past, present, and future—our direct, spontaneous experience of the thing itself, in the beauty and precision of this present moment.

— *Peter Matheson*

Human intelligence, caught in the slow, grinding gears of modernity, is simply not equipped enough to climb out of the hole modernity has dug. Our sluggish cognitive pace, even slower capacity for behavioral change, emotional blockages, the reflex to deny what is not convenient to know, and towering arrogance have left us struggling to find our footing. Perhaps it's time to eat some humble pie [and] get off the pedestal of human exceptionalism....

— *Vanessa Machado de Oliveira*
Outgrowing Modernity

All my work is meant to say, “You may encounter defeats, but you must not be defeated.”

— *Maya Angelou*

I wish I could show you when you are lonely or in darkness the astonishing light of your own being. Even after all this time the Sun never says to the Earth, "You owe me." Look what happens with a love like that, it lights the whole sky. Fear is the cheapest room in the house. I would like to see you living in better conditions.

— *Hafez*

If you see someone without a smile today, give 'em yours.

— *Dolly Parton*

The world is full of what seem like intractable problems. Often we let that paralyze us. Instead, let it spur you to action. There are some people in the world that we can't help, but there are so many more that we can. So when you see a mother and her children suffering in another part of the world, don't look away. Look right at them. Let them break your heart, then let your empathy and your talents help you make a difference in the lives of others. Whether you volunteer every week or just a few times a year, your time and unique skills are invaluable.

— *Melinda Gates*

We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility.

It's easy to say 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes.

-Fred Rogers

May your healing ripple back through time to heal your ancestors. May it ripple forward to heal your descendants. May it emanate outward to heal the world.

— *Author Unknown*

I cannot prevent anyone from getting angry, or mad, or frustrated. I can only hope that they'll turn that anger and frustration and madness into something positive.

— *Harvey Milk*

The situation [of a current war] is urgent. Right? Or is it? It is no more urgent than it always was. It is only more noticeable. The war reminds us that it always was urgent. It always was urgent to do something about the situation that erupts into our notice today.

What is that “situation” that is ordinarily beneath active notice? It is everything. It is the state of the world and all its people. It is the unfinished development of our souls, that we came here to complete. It is the Story of Separation, control, scarcity, and ascent. The “urge” of the urgency is the impulse to bring love wherever it is forgotten. It is to return to wholeness from the illusion of separation. The war isn't a departure from an acceptable normalcy. It is a reminder that normalcy is unacceptable.

— *Charles Eisenstein*

These are times that ask us to be courageously clear, fierce with love and do what we each can do. I want to encourage us all once again, in moments that feel overwhelming, to hold on to our deepest most beautiful values and live according to those ideals. There is no gift is too small, no act of love too small, every time we lean into the light and out of the shadows we are holding hands with a wide community of goodness, we are part of a movement for positive change. We are not alone. We are many and we are great with love.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.

— *Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

One of the questions I've been continuing to ask myself is what to do with a daily presentation of conscious cruelty. The only answer I've come up with for how to respond to conscious cruelty is with conscious love, intentional kindness, creative thinking and courageous action.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

It takes courage to love, but pain through love is the purifying fire which those who love generously know. We all know people who are so much afraid of pain that they shut themselves up like clams in a shell and, giving out nothing, receive nothing and therefore shrink until life is a mere living death.

— *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.

— *Vincent van Gogh*

The difference between try and triumph is just a little umph!

— *Marvin Phillips*

A laugh can be a very powerful thing. Why, sometimes in life, it's the only weapon we have.

— *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*

Every man has his own destiny: the only imperative is to follow it, to accept it, no matter where it leads him.

— *Henry Miller*

What wings are to a bird, and sails are to a ship, so is prayer to the soul.

— *Corrie Ten Boom*

Why Is the Buddha Smiling? That moment [of Awakening] is like taking a hood off your head. What boundless spaciousness and relief!... Everything opens, expands, becomes crisp, clear, brimming with life, vivid with wonder and freshness. It is as if the roof of your mind were flying off.... All limitations dissolve and fall away.... The roots of ignorance and suffering are severed utterly. And all things appear like a reflection in a mirror, transparent, shimmering, illusory, and dream-like.... A profound sense of humor wells up from within, and you smile in amusement at how inadequate all your former concepts and ideas about the nature of mind were.”

— *Sogyal Rinpoche*
The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying

What do I choose each day to pledge my heart and allegiance? What am I called to do in service to, what I have given my heart?

— *Carrie Newcomer*

To succeed in life, you need three things: a wishbone, a backbone, and a funny bone.

— *Reba McEntire*

When one door closes, sometimes we need to turn the knob to open another.

— *J.A. Tran*

I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.

— *Jimmy Dean*

We may encounter many defeats but we must not be defeated.

— *Maya Angelou*

It struck me that being a contemplative does not depend on adopting a particular technique. All such practices have the same aim: to help us see through the deceptions of self and world and listen for what Howard Thurman called “the sound of the genuine” within and around us. So contemplation can be defined in terms of its function, rather than its form. Contemplation, as I understand it, is any way one has of penetrating illusion and touching reality.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

If you can change your mind, you can change your life.

— *William James*

Faith is a knowledge within the heart, beyond the reach of proof.

— *Kahlil Gibran*

As your faith is strengthened, you will find that there is no longer the need to have a sense of control, that things will flow as they will, and that you will flow with them, to your great delight and benefit.

— *Emmanuel Teney*

Whoever acquires knowledge but does not practice it is as one who ploughs but does not sow.

— *Saadi*

Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance.

— *Will Durant*

To get what you love, you must first be patient with what you hate.

— *Al-Ghazali*

Meditation is not an escape from life... but a preparation for really being in life.

— *Thich Nhat Hahn*

What a wonderful life I've had! If only I'd realized it sooner.

— *Colette*

Finding beauty in a broken world is creating beauty in the world we find.

— *Terry Tempest Williams*

There is something in the human heart that keeps rising up, that against all odds does the right thing, and senses what shimmers in a moment. We create stories and songs and art of all kinds to name what is unnamable, to give form to our suffering and healing, to map where we get lost, to remember what is still true, still good, still possible.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Some folks seem able to get ahead of life's train wrecks via one of the classic contemplative practices that never worked for me—practices that take them to safe ground before their illusions come crashing down. I call those folks "Contemplatives by Intention," and I salute them. But most of the time, that's not me. Instead, I am a "Contemplative by Catastrophe." My wake-up calls to the reality of self and world come after the wreck has happened and I'm digging out of the debris.

I don't recommend this path to anyone. But if you, dear reader, are anything like me, I come as the bearer of glad tidings. Catastrophe can be a contemplative path, pitched and perilous as it may be, a path that can take us from our death-dealing illusions to life-giving realities—if we keep trying to turn experience into insight, whether as individuals or as a nation.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

I believe art, and what it describes, honors and expands will be what save us.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

I never will save the world. I'll never know what could've been. I only know to love what I've had. And that, no matter what I could have done differently or better, I have lived my life as someone I can believe in.

— *Shannon Hayes*

I am frightened and enraged most days by the direction we are going as a country, as a world wide community. And so each day I wake up and ask “what is mine to do” and “who will go with me?” The answer that comes back is “be kind, be curious, be courageous, be clear, be compassionate even to myself and make art. Keep leaning into beauty, keep telling a truer story, keep listing the luminous and naming the transcendent. Keep calling in what shimmers in our daily lives, keep writing the song that rises up with purpose and without apology. Keep telling the story that must be told, and in the telling makes us all more whole.
Keep writing.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Abundance, unmanaged, quickly devolves to chaos. But the chaos cannot be eliminated. In it are the seeds of abundance. It must be shepherded and stewarded. And that can only happen in the presence of love, teamwork, compassion, adaptability and acceptance.... [At night we] fall into our beds again knowing that, this day, we may not have gotten ahead of it all, but we gave it our best. And it's in the trying where the living actually happens.

— *Shannon Hayes*

May I be an instrument of peace. Where there is hatred, may I sow love. Where there is despair, may I sow hope. Where there is sadness, may I sow joy. Amen

— *Saint Francis*

Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care.

— *Theodore Roosevelt*

You are broadcasting all the time. The question is not whether you are creating, it's what you are creating.

— *Neville Goddard*

Even After all this time the sun never says to the Earth, "You owe Me." Look what happens with a love like that, it lights the whole sky.

— *Hafiz*

We're the cure for hatred caused by despair. We're the good morning of a bus driver who remembers our name, the tattooed man who gives up his seat on the subway. We're every door held open with a smile when we look into each other's eyes the way we behold the moon. We're the moon. We're the promise of one people, one breath declaring to one another: I see you. I need you. I am you.

— *Richard Blanco*

Declaration of Interdependence

The simple rose, at each moment of its slow blossoming, is as open as it can be. The same is true of our lives.

— *Mark Nepo*

The more sand that has escaped from the hourglass of our life, the clearer we should see through it.

— *Jean Paul*

If the world is to be healed through human efforts, I am convinced it will be by ordinary people, people whose love for this life is even greater than their fear.

— *Joanna Macy*,

Amidst the bustling corridors of human society, where the clamor of voices often drowns out the whispers of the heart, empathy emerges as a beacon of hope. It is a force that transcends the barriers of race, culture, and creed, weaving a tapestry of understanding and compassion. Empathy, in its truest form, is not merely the ability to understand an other's plight but a call to action, a rallying cry for justice and equality. In the realm of social justice movements, empathy plays a pivotal role, driving change and fostering understanding across diverse communities. The power of empathy lies in its ability to bridge divides, to create a sense of solidarity among disparate groups. It is the glue that holds together the fabric of social movements, enabling individuals from different backgrounds to unite under a common cause. Empathy fosters a sense of belonging, a recognition that we are all part of the same human family, and that the struggles of one are the struggles of all.

— *Bob Lynn*

Empathy: The Heartbeat of Social Justice

Miracles occur naturally as expressions of love. The real miracle is the love that inspires them. In this sense, everything that comes from love is a miracle.

— *Marianne Williamson*

I'm not asking you to come down here and clean out the muddy corners of my life. I'm asking you to be a forest where mud and leaves, shadows and light, growth and decay all have their unquestioned belonging. I'm asking you to be an ocean, where even great storms don't trouble the depths and each tear is welcomed as a homecoming. I'm asking you to be as spacious as the vast darkness behind the sky, which will never be afraid of what I do or don't choose. I'm not asking you to hold me together, I'm asking you to open so wide there's room for all the ways I come apart.

— *James A. Pearson*

Patience is the companion of wisdom.

— *Saint Augustine*

When facing an obstacle, take your attention away from your outer world and go into your inner world. Pause momentarily, take deep breaths, and be aware of the vast array of perspectives at play with no feeling or attachment. Don't react to the inharmonious circumstance; let it be what it is momentarily. Now, ask yourself, what is the right thing to do? This may be a silly question, but it is only by answering this question appropriately that you will be able to express yourself as your most divine and genuine self. When you choose the right thing to do, you choose the righteous path-your only true path of expression.

David Kasneci

The Key to the Universe

All that we behold is full of Blessings.

— *William Wordsworth*

Truly, we live with mysteries too marvelous to be understood.... Let me keep my distance, always from those who think they have the answers. Let me keep company always with those who say, "Look!" and laugh in astonishment, and bow their heads."

— *Mary Oliver*

Evidence

Out of this darkness a new world can arise, not to be constructed by our minds so much as to emerge from our dreams. Even though we cannot see clearly how it's going to turn out, we are still called to let the future into our imagination. We will never be able to build what we have not first cherished in our hearts.

— *Joanna Macy*

There was something really lovely about being a kid and laying on my back in the grass and wondering about things, coming up with creative ways to think about a question...or sometimes to just allow the question to shimmer in the air awhile. I really love to learn, but I really really love exploring the shape of a question.... A question is a curious animal, shy and brash and bold and beckoning. A question invites us into a story, creates a story, to consider an old or new story. A question invites us into wondering and pondering. A question gives us space to say, “hummmm, let me think about that for a moment.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Our minds are in a continuous flow of movement. So many thoughts, so many to do lists, so many demands... one too many deadlines to meet. In this cycle of “movement” how do we find rest? We often don’t, so we get wound all the way up, in sort of a whirlwind spiral, like a hurricane and we slow down when we are facing pain. Well my beautiful ones, know that you don’t have to be forced into submission—the soul is always speaking, but only when we quiet the mind will we hear it. Set your mind free, let go of your lists, find your way home. Yes, it does exist. Find a quiet space where you can call your own.

— *Hadiiya Barbel*

Finding our place in the world, finding our place in our local community, and making a difference in our own way all give meaning, purpose, and a deep, deep sense of fulfillment to our lives. We must not only find it for ourselves, but help every individual to find the same.

Author Unknown

All that you touch, you change. All that you change changes you.

— *Octavia Butler*

We must ask ourselves these questions: Do we provide a nonjudgmental environment for others to reveal themselves to us? Do we affirm those we love by complimenting them and expressing gratitude, not only for what they do, but for who they are? When others make mistakes, are we quick to judge and ridicule, or do we acknowledge it as a learning experience and part of their journey? Are we willing to take the first step and make ourselves vulnerable by beginning to reveal our true selves to others?

— *Matthew Kelly*

Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world.

— *George Bernard Shaw*

During the past 30 years, people from all civilized countries have consulted me. Among all [of them]... over 35..., there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has really been healed who did not again regain his religious outlook.

— *Karl Gustav Jung.*

How can this be, but it is. Every day has something in it whose name is forever.

— *Mary Oliver*

The words of kindness are more healing to a drooping heart than balm or honey.

— *Sarah Fielding*

The longer I live, the more deeply I learn that love ...is the work of mirroring and magnifying each other's light.

— *James Baldwin*

Nothing Personal

A murmuration is the word we use to describe the way a large groups of starlings (or other birds) will create complex, dynamic, three dimensional shapes in air. In a murmuration, there may be thousands of birds flying in dense shifting patterns, moving in harmony without a leader.... A murmuration is always adjusting and in fluid but constant relationship. Murmurations have always fascinated me, perhaps because there is something mysterious about their apparent collective intelligence, the possibility of a non-hierarchical system that doesn't just work, but works beautifully. As a poet, I love how murmurations are undulating examples of a mysterious unity in the natural world. A murmuration is interdependent and yet endlessly creative, every turn and spiral a new possibility in motion.... There is something so compelling about what emerges out of the always in motion mysterious prayer of a murmuration. I am moved by the possibilities of individual and collective imagination that seem to be so much of how a murmuration works.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity.

— *Pema Chödrön*

The Places That Scare You:
A Guide to Fearlessness in Difficult Times

Night is falling fast in our world, so we must learn to be gardeners in the dark.

— *Joel Elkes*

Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it.

—*Howard Thurman*
Meditations of the Heart

The New Coherence [is] a movement beyond fragmentation toward a resonant pattern of wholeness. This coherence isn't the triumph of light over dark; it weaves both into a living fabric strong enough to hold everything—joy and sorrow, presence and absence, devastation and new life. Perhaps one purpose of darkness is to dissolve certainty and deepen our trust in the unseen, so we can reweave something more honest and more whole.

— *R. Fabian*
Kosmos Journal

One of the greatest gifts we can offer people is to embody nonattachment and nonfear. This is a true teaching, more precious than money or material resources. Many of us are very afraid, and this fear distorts our lives and makes us unhappy. We cling to objects and to people like a drowning person clings to a floating log. Practicing to realize nondiscrimination, to see the interconnectedness and impermanence of all things, and to share this wisdom with others, we are giving the gift of nonfear. Everything is impermanent. This moment passes. That person walks away. Happiness is still possible.

— *Thích Nhất Hạnh*
How to Love

Naming, claiming and embracing the whole of who we are, our shadow as well as our light, is easier said than done. Honest self-examination is a well-known source of human suffering! For me it meant walking into and through the shame I felt about being forty-plus and still not having figured out how to live. And yet, the alternative to honesty is more painful still. As Erik Erikson argues in his scheme of adult development, if we can't accept all that we've been and done, we'll age away from "integrity" (aka wholeness) toward "despair."

— *Parker J Palmer*

Religion expresses a yearning. It is right there in the etymology of the word. A yearning to be tied back to the creative wellspring, the Source (re-ligio). A yearning to have that aching void filled with what is supposed to be at the center of us, were it not this emptiness.

— *Natureza Gabriel*
Kosmos Journal

Life offers endless opportunities to find out how flimsy our illusions are and draw closer to the reality of our lives.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.

— *Martin Luther King Jr.*

I wish that I could be more like [a tree] sometimes, because when you think about it, trees filter toxins out of the atmosphere simply by their presence. They convert sunlight into food energy without discrimination. And through their mycelium and their roots, they connect to the wider web of life. And, in that same way, I feel that I have to be a good tree. To try to convert some of the toxic substances in my energy field, some of the suffering, into compassion, and to offer the ‘food’ of my presence for the benefit of all Life.

— *Rhonda Fabian*
Kosmos Journal

There is a lovely idea in the Celtic tradition that if you send out goodness from yourself, or if you share that which is happy or good within you, it will all come back to you multiplied ten thousand times. In the kingdom of love there is no competition, there is no possessiveness or control. The more love you give away, the more love you will have.

— *John O'Donohue*
Anam Cara

Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of his personality. No one can become fully aware of the very essence of another human being unless he loves him. By his love he is enabled to see the essential traits and features in the beloved person; and even more, he sees that which is potential in him, which is not yet actualized but yet ought to be actualized. Furthermore, by his love, the loving person enables the beloved person to actualize these potentialities. By making him aware of what he can be and of what he should become, he makes these potentialities come true

— *Viktor E. Frankl*
Man's Search for Meaning

As everything crumbles above and around us, it is still true that the most strategic move is the ever changing dance of love

— *Adrienne Maree Brown*

Kindness is a principle so true and essential that something deep down in us expects it. There is a sense of “ahhhhh yes” when we experience kindness. There it is, and there it is again. There is a sense of disconnect and even shock when we encounter conscious cruelty or intentional meanness. There is something out of joint, the cogs in the wheel got stuck, we are bewildered on some level.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Life is a hard battle anyway. If we laugh and sing a little as we fight the good fight of freedom, it makes it all go easier. I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me.

— *Sojourner Truth (1797-1883)*

Gaining enlightenment in an accident. Spiritual practice simply makes us more accident-prone.

— *Zen saying*

Will you teach your children what we have taught our children? That the earth is our mother? What befalls the earth befalls all the sons of the earth. This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

—*Chief Seattle*
Letter to All, 1854

I know in these troubled times it is easy to become cynical. Honestly, it's a lot safer to be cynical. If we are cynical about things we are never disappointed. It is way riskier to lean into hope and believe in the power of goodness. It is riskier because most likely there will be times when I am disappointed, and then choose to lean back into hope and the power of goodness. But it is my belief that the Celtic notion of the principle of kindness and goodness given and received expresses a deeper wisdom, a more powerful picture of our true and natural state. Why do I believe this to be so? Because when kindness bubbles up naturally, it feels good, it feels right, it feels like something that suppose to happen in the course of an extraordinary ordinary day. I believe it because I have seen small daily acts of goodness and love change things in profound ways. I believe it because someone, for absolutely no reason than to be kind, gave me a second scoop, just in case—and all these years later, I am still grateful.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

A human body gives you access to the life within, peace within. And that peace is, by nature, a river that brings you to the Ocean that you are.

— *Swami Muktananda*
Divine Life Society, India

The honorary duty of a human being is to love.

— *Maya Angelou*

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

First Corinthians 13

Each new dawn is a miracle; each new day fills the sky with beauty. Their testimony speaks to the whole world and reaches the ends of the earth.

— *Psalms 19*

The longer I live, the more deeply I learn that love ...is the work of mirroring and magnifying each other's light.

— *James Baldwin*
Nothing Personal

Let one cultivate an infinite good will for all beings... Just as a mother would protect her only child with her life, even so let one cultivate a boundless love toward all beings

— *Karaniya Metta Sutta*

Love is the light that guideth in darkness, and the living link that uniteth God with man

— *Bahá'u'lláh*
Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

Love is more than a feeling. Love is a form of sweet labor: fierce, bloody, imperfect, and life-giving—a choice we make over and over again. If love is sweet labor, love can be taught, modeled, and practiced. This labor engages all our emotions. Joy is the gift of love. Grief is the price of love. Anger protects that which is loved. And when we think we have reached our limit, wonder is the act that returns us to love.

— *Valarie Kaur*
See No Stranger: A Memoir and
Manifesto of Revolutionary Love

Everything that you love, you will eventually lose. But in the end, love will return in a different form.

— *Susan Cain*
Bittersweet

The mystery we feel in the sky and that we sense within us is not a series of problems to be solved, but more something to evoke wonder and love.

— *Marv Hiles*
The Almanac of the Soul

Attention is the most basic form of love. By paying attention, we let ourselves be touched by life, and our hearts naturally become more open and engaged.

— *Tara Brach*

Love is the only sane and satisfactory answer to the problem of human existence.

— *Erich Fromm*

To truly love we must learn to mix various ingredients - care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication.

— *Bell Hooks*

All About Love: New Visions

We must discover the power of love, the power, the redemptive power of love. And when we discover that we will be able to make of this old world a new world. We will be able to make men better. Love is the only way.

— *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Loving Your Enemies

Doubling down on love demands that we be brave enough to straddle the tension of staying awake to the struggle in the world and fighting for justice and peace, while also cultivating a love ethic in our own lives. We can't sacrifice the micro for the macro, or the macro for the micro.

Love, belonging, connection, and joy are irreducible needs for all of us. We can't give people what we don't have. We have to live love to give love

— *Brené Brown*

My heart has become capable of every form: it is a pasture for gazelles and a monastery for Christian monks... I follow the religion of Love: whatever way Love's camels take, that is my religion and my faith.

— *Ibn Arabi*

Tarjuman al-Ashwaq

Only now did he understand what it really meant to build a home. It was about the decision to show up for each other day after day, even when it was hard. It was about choosing love over fear, connection over safety, hope over resignation. Sometimes the most extraordinary miracles are disguised as ordinary moments.

— *Author Unknown*

Staying in touch with the soul's imperatives... is not easy, surrounded as we are by conspiracy junkies, social media that serve as Petri dishes for viral falsehoods and toxins, and mass media that collaborate.... This is where the poets (and other artists) come to our rescue. As William Carlos Williams *wrote*, "It is difficult / to get the news from poems / yet men [and women] die / miserably every day / for lack / of what is found there." What's found in Wendell Berry's "How to Be a Poet" is, of course, a call to step away from noise and frenzy—from anything that distorts the soul's truth—and step into the simplicity and silence that make it possible to hear the still, small voice of true self.

The "sacred" as I understand it is not tied to a particular creed. The sacred is found in whatever is worthy of reverence and respect. I think, for example, of the wilderness areas where I've been privileged to spend time. In boreal forests, on the desert, in the mountains and on the coasts, there are places where you can still see the earth in near-pristine glory. To all who have a heart, the earth itself is sacred.

The sacred is always with us, everywhere, all the time—but only for those who have "eyes to see and ears to hear." ...Sabbath time allows us to sit quietly in the presence of that which is wondrous, opening our eyes, ears and hearts as fully as we can, so we can bring that vulnerability back to our life and work in a wounded world.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Love is a state of Being. Your love is not outside; it is deep within you. You can never lose it, and it cannot leave you. It is not dependent on some other body, some external form.

— *Eckhart Tolle*

Hatred is, indeed, never appeased by hatred in this world. It is appeased only by loving-kindness. This is an ancient law.

— *Dhammapada, Verse 5*

There is a pervasive form of modern violence to which the idealist...most easily succumbs: activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most common form, of its innate violence. To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything is to succumb to violence. The frenzy of the activist neutralizes his [or her] work... It destroys the fruitfulness of his [or her]... work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful.

—*Thomas Merton*

Being love rather than giving or taking love, is the only thing that provides stability.

—*Ram Dass*

The honorary duty of a human being is to love.

—*Maya Angelou*

Every ending is also a beginning if we're brave enough to turn the page.

—*Author Unknown*

The finest form of artistic expression is in the way we live our lives—and that gives everyone a chance to be an artist....For Thoreau, “art” meant more than beauty and light. A meaningful work of art contains the “dark thread” of adversity, loss, fear and suffering that is woven through every life. Just as great writing, music, and painting are animated by the creative tension between their elements, it’s the way we hold the tension between life’s challenges and possibilities that makes our lives works of art. Science offers no formula for how to do this, but artists give us clues by circling around such mysteries and evoking our intuition.

—*Parker J. Palmer*

We really fail to allow people to build a relationship with their creativity.... It's very exciting to have arrived in this place where what seemed like this wide range of randomly acquired skills and abilities—of their own volition, because I got out of the way of them—started to cohere. I just go along for the ride now, shaping, leading, following, doing what needs to be done, deeply committed, attentive and forever increasing my knowledge and skill-base where needed.

— *Victoria Spence*

Director at Life Rites Funerals

“I think the most important question facing humanity is, ‘Is the universe a friendly place?’ This is the first and most basic question all people must answer for themselves.

“For if we decide that the universe is an unfriendly place, then we will use our technology, our scientific discoveries and our natural resources to achieve safety and power by creating bigger walls to keep out the unfriendliness and bigger weapons to destroy all that which is unfriendly. If we decide that the universe is neither friendly nor unfriendly and that God is essentially ‘playing dice with the universe’, then we are simply victims to the random toss of the dice and our lives have no real purpose or meaning. But if we decide that the universe is a friendly place, then we will use our technology, our scientific discoveries and our natural resources to create tools and models for understanding that universe. Because power and safety will come through understanding its workings and its motives.”

— *Albert Einstein*

The Albert Einstein quote above is often abbreviated to the opening line, “I think the most important question facing humanity is, ‘Is the universe a friendly place?’ ” The short quote is an intriguing question on a personal level. Do I sense the possibility and presence of something good, something true and transcendent, something bottom-line friendly that threads through my life, through the world and through all

things? What Einstein is supposing is a much wider and deeper question than “Do you identify as an optimist or pessimist, a glass half full or glass half empty kind of person?” It asks me if I believe the building blocks of the universe are made of light or shadow, goodness or meanness, meaninglessness or purpose and meaning.... The great scientist goes on to describe how we, as a society and world community, choose how we frame our understanding of the universe as a society and world community. If we choose to see everyone and everything as an unfriendly threat, we will use our resources and technology in ways that contribute to the insecurity of us all. If we choose to believe in a thread of goodness at the heart of things, we are more likely to use our resources and technology in ways that create greater connection and understanding....When we make the choice each day to live aligned with what is good and decent, transcendent and true—we align ourselves with love. Love which is still the greatest power. I know that when I choose to frame the essential essence of the universe as friendly, I align myself with that great power and I make different kinds of decisions about how to interact with others and the world around me.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Memo to Self: Live “deliberately and simply,” knowing that everything you say and do is written in the book of life. Keep writing until the end, writing with your life, even when you can no longer put pen to paper. Let your life speak of love, truth and justice, and join with others who speak that language. Do it all with gratitude for the daily chance you have to help write a poem that celebrates life.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

— *Victor Frankl*

I remember having a conversation with my friend Parker J. Palmer about a spiritual text which encouraged the reader to “Be not afraid.” He interpreted the text as not saying that we would never experience fear. In his interpretation the text encouraged us to not “be” the fear. I very much appreciated that interpretation because there are times when fear is the appropriate response to a very real danger.... But I do not have to “be” the fear. I do not have to be defined or immobilized by fear or rage. I can ground myself in what is still beautiful and true, I can tap into a well of resource and resiliency, I can wake up again tomorrow and ask, “what is mine to do and who will go with me?” I know this all might sound a little woo-woo for some folks, but for me it actually feels very clarifying and in one sense practical. Where do we align, with love or fear? If I align with love, let that reflect in how I live.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

The love of the beauty of the world is the only pure love. It is the love that enables us to look at things without trying to appropriate them.

— *Simone Weil*

In the kingdom of love there is no competition; there is no possessiveness or control. The more love you give away, the more love you will have.

— *John O'Donohue*

Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom

I have built homes as part of a Habitat for Humanity team in Nepal, Kenya, Cambodia and Peru. In all these places I gained a sense that the world is a friendly place, at least when we go there to give our love. That lived experience sets my mind on the side of a kinder, gentler universe if we let it be that.

— *Linda Kuker*

My calling, as a writer and person, is to raise up the good of our common human experience and encourage our search for that which, as old Quakers used to say, “is eternal” —the Love and Light of the Divine.

— *Brent Bill*

The task is impossible, but we do it anyway.

— *Mitzi Minor*

The friendship between us, the mutual confidence, the delight of the heart, these things do not perish and can not be destroyed.

— *Voltaire*

How prompt we are to satisfy the hunger and thirst of our bodies; how slow to satisfy the hunger and thirst of our souls.

— *Thoreau*

You will never be able to experience everything. So, please, do poetical justice to your soul and simply experience yourself

— *Albert Camus*

Nature uses human imagination to lift her work of creation to even higher levels.

— *Luigi Pirandello*

We may give without loving, but we cannot love without giving.

— *Bernard Meltzer*

As flying is the essential thing for a bird to be a bird, to study the self is the essential thing for us human beings to be human.

— *Shohaku Okumura*

A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful. full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood.

— *Rachel Carson*

Love is not only something you feel, it is something you do.

— *David Wilkerson*

When ambition ends, happiness begins.

— *Thomas Merton*

The words of kindness are more healing to a drooping heart than balm or honey.

— *Sarah Fielding*

This is the precept by which I have lived: Prepare for the worst; expect the best; and take what comes.

— *Hannah Arendt*

Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world.

— *George Bernard Shaw*

Nothing great in the world has ever been accomplished without passion.

— *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel*

Happiness is an inside job. When you live in conscious union with God, you realize that joy is not dependent on outer circumstances.

— *Richard Rohr*

Everything Belongs:
The Gift of Contemplative Prayer

I don't have to chase extraordinary moments to find joy—it's right in front of me when I pay attention and practice gratitude.

—*Brené Brown*
The Gifts of Imperfection

The more sand that has escaped from the hourglass of our life, the clearer we should see through it.

—*Jean Paul*

One who is self-controlled, with mind disciplined, attains tranquility; in tranquility, all sorrows are destroyed.

—*Bhagavad Gītā*

Kindness may not always fill your pockets, but it will always fill your soul. And sometimes, when you least expect it, kindness will return to you in ways beyond imagination.

—*Author Unknown*

When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy.

—*Rumi*

A lighthouse isn't concerned with whether ships are watching it from a distance. It simply shines forth.

—*Rob Brezsny*

I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him.

—*Galileo*

Even Socrates, who lived a very frugal and simple life, loved to go to the market. When his students asked about this, he replied, "I love to go and see all the things I am happy without."

—*Jack Kornfield*

The difference between misery and happiness depends on what we do with our attention.

— *Sharon Salzberg*
Lovingkindness

A lighthouse isn't concerned with whether ships are watching it from a distance. It simply shines forth."

— *Rob Brezsny*

Happiness comes not from trying to get rid of all the difficult things, but by learning to open to them with compassion.

— *Pema Chödrön*
When Things Fall Apart

Joy is what happens to us when we allow ourselves to recognize how good things really are.

— *Marianne Williamson*
A Return to Love

Love is like an hourglass, with the heart filling up as the brain empties.

— *Jules Renard*

Sometimes the best way to chase away bad people is to be so good yourself that there is no room for badness to grow.

— *Author Unknown*

The greatest gift I can give is to see, hear, understand and touch another person.

— *Virginia Satir*

Only those who have found God within can find happiness without —Meister Eckhart, Sermons

All that we behold is full of blessing.

— *William Wordsworth*

If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.

—*Marcus Aurelius*

Trauma was not being able to get the hands of the clock off of me. Healing was learning no one has ever laid a fingerprint on the part of me that's infinite.

—*Andrea Gibson*

The fabric of nature carries transformational answers for humanity as we have never been separate from our own creation story, no matter how far we may have drifted. But breaking down the walls between ourselves, Mother Earth, and the cosmos at large also requires us to break down the barriers between one another. We have been operating from a behavioral function that is foreign to our genetic makeup—every man for himself, disjointed communities, and convenience over truly living as co-creators of nature. Yet nature is encouraging us each day to remember ourselves as a murmuration—to exist as our blueprint intended, together.

—*Zach Bush*

Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance, order, rhythm, and harmony.

—*Thomas Merton*

No Man Is an Island

I have also come to understand that although some people are naturally happier than others, their happiness is still vulnerable and incomplete, and that achieving durable happiness as a way of being is a skill. It requires sustained effort in training the mind and developing a set of human qualities, such as inner peace, mindfulness, and altruistic love.

—*Matthieu Ricard*

Happiness: A Guide to Developing
Life's Most Important Skill

I find, in my own life, vows so very helpful because they channel my energy to do what I really want to do....

The following five vows are the ones she suggests:

1 - To commit myself daily to the healing of our world and the welfare of all beings.

2 - To live on Earth more lightly and less violently in the food, products and energy I consume.

3 - To draw strength and guidance from the living Earth, the ancestors, the future beings, and my brothers and sisters of all species.

4 - To support each other in our work for the world and to ask for help when I feel the need.

5 - To pursue a daily practice that clarifies my mind, strengthens my heart and supports me in observing these vows.

Rather than using the term vows, we can, if we prefer, call them “commitments” or “statements of intention”. They offer an anchor point reminding us, again and again, of the purposes we hold dear and the behaviors that support us in serving them.

— *Joanna Macy*

If you stop trying to make yourself more than you are, out of fear that you are less than you are, whoever you really are will be a lot lighter and happier and easier to live with, too.

— *Jon Kabat-Zinn*

Wherever You Go, There You Are:
Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life

Every minute you are angry, you lose sixty seconds of happiness.

— *Author Unknown*

(Often misattributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson)

It is not happiness that makes us grateful; it is gratefulness that makes us happy.

— *Br. David Steindl-Rast*

Happiness is like a butterfly, the more you chase it, the more it will evade you, but if you notice the other things around you, it will gently come and sit on your shoulder.

—Henry David Thoreau

Perhaps the place to start is not to ask “What can I do” but first ask “What do I love.” Begin from there, where the heart expands where you know for sure what actually matters, Because it is love, always Love, that keeps pointing us in the right general direction, illuminating the path, even if it cannot always clear the way.

— Carrie Newcomer

Judging people from a distance may help you to keep your ideology alive, but drawing close to them gives you a chance to keep your humanity alive—and our humanity, informed by the better angels of our nature, is the key to our future.

— Parker J. Palmer

Hard times require furious dancing. Each of us is proof.

— Alice Walker

Hard Times Require
Furious Dancing

Beauty, awareness, and love of nature are not luxuries in tumultuous times, but essentials.... To serve Life is to acknowledge its sacredness in every moment—in the wisdom of sunlight, a flower’s smile, or the long arc of consciousness reaching toward coherence.... We are not isolated individuals. We are cells in the body of humanity, and what we do to one another we do to ourselves. The new story is one of interdependence, shared purpose, and sacred relationship with all Life.

— Nancy Roof
founder of Kosmos Journal

Happiness begins with self-knowledge. Until we know ourselves, we can't truly know joy.

— *Bell Hooks,*
All About Love

What simple pleasures are true for you right now? What can you see, hear, smell, taste, or feel that is pleasing to you at this moment? What pleasant colors, shades of light, shapes, scents, flavors, or skin sensations are you aware of? Let gratitude fill you. Rest in awareness of feeling grateful.

— *Susan Bauer-Wu*

Unhappiness is an inward, not an outward thing. It is as independent of circumstances as is happiness. Consider the truly happy people you know. I think it is unlikely that you will find that circumstances have made them happy. They have made themselves happy in spite of circumstances.

—*Eleanor Roosevelt*
You Learn by Living:
Eleven Keys for a More Fulfilling Life

He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.

— *Epictetus*

My job is to keep looking for ways, personal and political, to rebuild what Lincoln called “the bonds of affection” between us. Only so can we cultivate the compassion on which community depends

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Sometimes the greatest achievements can't be measured in dollars or milestones, but in the courage to believe that broken things can heal, that different worlds can merge, and that love, simple, stubborn, everyday love, is the most powerful force in any universe.

— *Author Unknown*

What could I help build through a love of and attention to the present? The self we cultivate and the actions that live beyond us are the pedigree that surpasses mere physical heredity. What we pass on to the future is no longer simply genetic but a trans-genetic legacy, that which, as ancestors to the future, we safeguard and generate.

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

Walk as if you are kissing the Earth with your feet.
Gratitude is the path.

— *Thich Nhat Hanh*
Peace Is Every Step

The love in our hearts is what happens when we stop letting fear dictate our choices, when we decided that the distance between worlds is just space waiting to be bridged, when we understand that the most profound transformations often came disguised as ordinary moments....

— *Author Unknown*

Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received.
Thankfulness is the natural impulse to express that feeling.

— *Howard Thurman*
Meditations of the Heart

It's not naive to think you can change the world. It's naive to think you could possibly be in the world and not change it.

— *David Lamotte*

Life is a hard battle anyway. If we laugh and sing a little as we fight the good fight of freedom, it makes it all go easier. I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me.

— *Sojourner Truth (1797-1883)*
a formerly enslaved woman who became
a powerful advocate for abolition and women's rights:

Humor is the weapon of the wise, for it disarms the arrogant.

—*Aristophanes*

Part of the unlearning we're doing is to re-contextualize and re-understand the role of grief as a mystery unto itself—not as something to avoid or to understand, but to go within and to transmute, to evolving through and with.

Grief is the chrysalis chamber in many ways and it's necessary in some ways for the redemption for our action. On some level, we can say, "Well, this grief is not ours. It's for the collective whole." Yes, that's true, and in some sense, in a meaningful sense, we are the collective whole. By working with the shadow and light aspects of grief, we are taking responsibility for the emotions that come with the actions we have undertaken as a civilization. Whether it's collective grief or individual grief or community grief, perhaps it is not something to be avoided, but is actually part of refining our character.

—*Alnoor Ladha*
Kosmos Journal

I'm talking about the spontaneous humor that bubbles up in everyday life, the kind that can make life lighter even in hard times, the kind that Clive James meant when he said, "Common sense and a sense of humor are the same thing, moving at different speeds.

—*Parker J. Palmer*

Angels can fly because they can take themselves lightly.

—*G. K. Chesterton*

Beauty, awareness, and love of nature are not luxuries in tumultuous times, but essentials.

—*Nancy Roof*
Founder, Kosmos Journal

Kindness cost nothing, but its worth everything.

— *Author Unknown*

Zen is not about non movement.... Sitting is a centered strong position in the midst of movement. When you get a top spinning just right, even though it is going very fast, it's so stable that it doesn't even look as if it's moving. If it's slightly off balance, it wobbles. It has to be centered and moving very fast in order to be stable. That's what Zen is all about.

— *Bernie Glassman.*

Just to be alive is a great joy. Give thanks for all of it.

— *Hafiz*

The Gift (Daniel Ladinsky, trans.)

I'm glad for a change of mind and heart that may help me channel the only power that can animate a better world. "Have compassion for everyone you meet," said poet Miller Williams. "You do not know what wars are going on down there where the spirit meets the bone."

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Falling isn't failing, it's just learning to rise.

— *Author Unknown*

Well being means to be fully born, to become what one potentially is; it means to have the full capacity for joy and sadness or, to put it still differently, to awake from the half slumber the average man lives in and be fully awake.

— *Erich Fromm.*

The greatest sin is to be unconscious.

— *Carl Gustav Jung*

Better a handful of quietness than both hands full with toil and much chasing the wind.

— *Ecclesiastes 4:6.*

If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere.

—*Vincent van Gogh*

We cannot do everything, but we have great power in how we choose to live our daily lives. We give according to our abilities, situations and our gifts. We take courage in knowing that there are others with gifts that we cannot provide. We don't have to do it all...only our part. We don't have to do it all alone and we are not alone. We are many and we are great with love.

—*Carrie Newcomer*

No one wrote more compellingly about the link between gratitude and social change than the late Joanna Macy, the environmental activist whose work on “despair and empowerment” has been so influential in the campaign to mitigate the planetary crises of our time. As Matthew Fox has written, Macy saw gratitude as “a stance of the soul, a revolutionary, grounding, and subversive act that is independent of external circumstances. It is a ‘primal wow’ of being alive that counters the consumerist message of insufficiency. Gratitude helps individuals feel sufficient, fostering the strength to face the world’s pain and engage in [what she called] the ‘Great Turning.’ ... I often cite her teaching that ‘when your heart breaks, the whole universe can pour through.’ She urged us to put our energy into gratitude, face hurt head on, and remain creative and fight the good fight.”

—*Parker J. Palmer*

Life is a balance of holding on and letting go.

—*Rumi*

I have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These are your greatest treasures.

—*Lao-tzu*

We are not isolated individuals. We are cells in the body of humanity, and what we do to one another we do to ourselves. The new story is one of interdependence, shared purpose, and sacred relationship with all Life.

— *Nancy Roof*

Turning to face my fear, I meet the warrior who lives within.

— *Jennifer Welwood*

Serving Life requires us to stretch beyond boundaries, both inner and outer, until even that binary dissolves. From the stars that birthed us, to the communities that sustain us, there is only one continuous and eternal “present moment”. When the boundaries dissolve, love remains – vast, unchanging. To serve is to love, and to love is to transform.

— *R. Fabian*
Kosmos Journal

Yes, these are times that bring up deep anxiety and fear...but we do not have to “be” that fear. We can “be” the love that overcomes fear. We can be the love that turns the world around and points the way.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Faith is impossible without awe. Awe precedes faith; it is at the root of faith. We must grow in awe in order to reach faith. We must be guided by awe to be worthy of faith.

— *Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel*

In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer. And that makes me happy, for it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me... I can be thankful.

— *Albert Camus*
Return to Tipasa

Our culture has largely shut down “the language of the Great Heart,” as Deena Metzger writes.... The Great Heart is our unitive consciousness, the spiritual awareness where we feel a deep love and connection with all life on Earth, including each other. Relationship is the basis of the ecology of life on Earth, and is what drives the fitness of species. The notion of fitness in evolution has been misunderstood as simply competition, that nature is “red in tooth and claw” and only the strongest survive. But “fitness is relational,” states Francis Heylighen, a Belgian cyberneticist known for his investigations into the emergence and evolution of intelligent organization. He explains that fitness is actually found in the capacity to form relationships. This is expressed best through the concept of synergy, meaning that “together you can do more than alone. Fitness is about minimizing conflict and friction and maximizing synergy.” Cooperation, in other words, is more of a driver of evolution than competition.

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

Our sensitivities to this relational nature, of our fundamental kinship with life... results in both an attitude of reverence (a feeling of respect for the divine inward nature of all life) but even more crucially, a sense of wonder. Wonder is energization of relationship. To feel amazement at the ground of our existence, the planet, the still unfolding evolutionary journey and our role in it, is to develop an unshakable faith. Not faith in “God,” but faith in the becomingness of the Universe. If God is the term we use, it is God as verb. Wonder opens our hearts and allows us to deeply see the magnificence around us, and that is in constant supply. We live in an ocean of beauty. [which] helps to reawaken that great enamorment, keeping it central to our actions.

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

I choose gratitude. I choose wonder. I choose awe. I choose everything that suggests I’m opening myself to the miraculous reality of simply being alive for one moment more.

— *Scott Stabile*

I never look at masses as my responsibility; I look at the individual. I can only love one person at a time—just one, one, one. So you begin. I began—I picked up one person. Maybe if I didn't pick up that one person, I wouldn't have picked up forty-two thousand.... The same thing goes for you, the same thing in your family, the same thing in your church, your community. Just begin—one, one, one.

— *Mother Teresa.*

If you have rich empty oases in you, places for refreshment and pause, you can more likely enjoy a happy life.

— *Thomas Moore*

If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.

— *Marcus Aurelius*

Trauma was not being able to get the hands of the clock off of me. Healing was learning no one has ever laid a fingerprint on the part of me that's infinite.

— *Andrea Gibson*

Leonard Cohen said his teacher once told him that, the older you get, the lonelier you become, and the deeper the love you need. This is because, as we go through life, we tend to over-identify with being the hero of our stories. This hero isn't exactly having fun: he's getting kicked around, humiliated, and disgraced. But if we can let go of identifying with him, we can find our rightful place in the universe, and a love more satisfying than any we've ever known.

— *Paul Weinfield*

Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment; cleverness is mere opinion, bewilderment is intuition.

— *Rumi*

Masnavi, Book IV

Guru Nanak, the first Guru of the Sikhs, shared a message that was radical for his day. He questioned empty rituals, exposed the hypocrisy of the powerful, and encouraged ordinary people to rise above the endless chase for material wants. He journeyed across forests, rivers, and deserts, facing extreme weather and resistance. By his side was Bhai Mardana, carrying his rebec (a stringed instrument). Guru Nanak expressed his teachings in verses, born of Divine inspiration. With Bhai Mardana's music, these verses flowed into song.

One day, Bhai Mardana sat unusually quiet, rolling a stone in his hand. Seeing his troubled face, Guru Nanak asked gently, "Why do you look so lost today?" Bhai Mardana hesitated, then spoke: "Sometimes a storm rises in my mind, and I cannot make sense of it. We travel to so many places. In some, strangers welcome you warmly, refusing to let you go. But in others, people curse you, mock you—even turn hostile. Why is it like that? Why don't they see you the same way?" Guru Nanak listened, then said, "I will answer your question. But first, take this stone to the market and see what you can get for it."

Puzzled, Bhai Mardana obeyed. At the market, there were shops selling sweets, vegetables, cloth and more. He went first to the sweet-seller, who looked at the stone, laughed, and told him to move along. At the grain shop, the busy seller waved him away, saying he had customers to attend to. At the vegetable stall, the vendor was amused, but handed him an onion just to get rid of him. Finally, he entered the shop of Salas Rai, the jeweler. As soon as Salas Rai saw the stone, his eyes lit up. "This is no ordinary stone—it's a ruby! I cannot pay its full worth, but if you allow me a closer look, I can offer you one hundred rupees." Bhai Mardana returned with the money, astonished. "What does this mean?" he asked. Guru Nanak explained, "Truth is like this gem. Many will dismiss it as worthless. But those who truly recognize it know it is beyond price." ⇨

We often hear about the rewards of walking the right path. But less often do we prepare for the brickbats that come with it. Truth is not valued universally. You may face ridicule, rejection, or even hostility. Yet if you know the value of the gem in your hand, you will not let go. Along the way, bouquets and brickbats are par for the course.

— *Gurpreet*
The Sabad Project
in Wisdom Stories

There are as many atoms in a single molecule of your DNA as there are stars in the typical galaxy. We are, each of us, a little universe.

— *Neil deGrasse Tyson*
Cosmos

Wear gratitude like a cloak and it will feed every corner of your life.

— *Rumi*
The Essential Rumi
(trans. Coleman Barks)

The good news about pain is the way it cries out for attention. If you place your mind on your pain, you know just where your mind is. The trick is to stay aware of the mind. Most of the time, when pain asks for attention, we respond by trying to get rid of it. Pain becomes an object outside the mind that needs to be ejected, thrown out. Here's the curious, counter-intuitive aspect about pain: When we meet pain with resistance, the pain does not diminish. Instead we add suffering to the pain. The feeling sensation of pain arises in the body. The negative reaction to pain arises in the mind of the fixed self and transforms physical pain into an enemy. That's how the suffering arises. When we try to get rid of pain, we pit ourselves against ourselves, becoming private war zones—not environments best suited for healing.

— *Mingyur Rinpoche*

When we begin to access fields of collective trauma to begin the healing process together, we often become aware of those who have passed away, often in violent circumstances. Their presence may be palpable in the social fabric until the transgression has been re-owned by those who are living, allowing these souls to rest in peace. Often, societies try to hide or look away from this collective pain, which is why the integration process gets stuck. Looking away from the pain means we can't be present with each other; metaphorically, we are dispersed in space and time. When we as humanity are not fully present to what is happening now, and what has not been resolved in the past, we become obsessed with looking forward. We become hypnotized by the idea of building or getting to a better world in the future because we can't be with the world as it is happening now. This is an important defense mechanism that helps us to not feel the pain or deal with past transgressions. However, if we don't examine those consciously, we will stay fragmented and re-traumatization will occur. The only way we can build a better world is to build it in this world. We need to use every moment to co-create the world we wish to live in instead of wishing for it to happen tomorrow.

— *Thomas Huebl*

So embrace humility in everything. Life isn't out to get you, nor are your struggles your fault. Every defeat is just an angel, tugging at your sleeve, telling you that you don't have to keep banging your head against the wall. Leave that striver there, trapped in his lonely ambitions. Just walk away, and life in its vastness will embrace you.

— *Paul Weinfield*

Gratitude goes beyond the “mine” and “thine” and claims the truth that all of life is a pure gift.

—*Henri Nouwen*

The Return of the Prodigal Son

Wendell Berry wrote, “What we need is here.” Those words push back on one of our most debilitating illusions: that the answer to our problems is always “out there” somewhere, never “in here.” It’s an illusion that’s constantly reinforced by educational and religious institutions that make us dependent on “experts” and “authorities” who have “the final word.” Disempowered by a culture that ignores the abundant resources within us and between us, we are left feeling helpless when institutions and their leaders fail us....

“Cultivate the ancient faith known as trust,” says Wendell Berry. [He] speaks to our condition at a time when everything is out of joint and we feel powerless to do much about it. Even so, he says, there is no need to pray for the miracle of “new earth or heaven.” Instead, we need “to be quiet in heart, and in eye, clear” in order to see that “what we need is here.” Faith, for Berry, does not require theological gymnastics. It means living with the kind of abandon that allows us to fall asleep trusting that we will wake up, or to fall in love trusting that love will awaken us to a larger life. That’s the “ancient faith” that allows migrating geese to make their journey, and will help us make ours.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.

— *Meister Eckhart*

Mother Earth’s Humming: Now, She still ripples. She still hums, pulses, quivers. She still sighs, murmurs under the Skies. We pay attention, and all we hear is urgency. Waters whirl, winds rise, fires rage, irate. The challenges are innumerable, but also infinite are the opportunities. Our grief is daunting, but also heartening is our compassion. We course a cosmic webbing holding awe and horror, wonder and doubt, creation and transition... us and all others. This abysmal relentless weaving is love in all its myriad forms.

— *Yuria Celidwen*

The person who, being really on the Way, falls upon hard times in the world, will not, as a consequence, turn to that friend who offers him refuge and comfort and encourages their old self to survive. Rather, he will seek out someone who will faithfully and inexorably help him to risk himself, so that he may endure the difficulty and pass courageously through it. Only to the extent that a person exposes himself over and over again to annihilation, can that which is indestructible be found within them. In this daring lies dignity and the spirit of true awakening.

— *Karlfried Durckheim*

Gratitude is the recognition that we belong, that we are part of something infinitely bigger than ourselves.

— *Richard Rohr*
Falling Upward

The quieter you become the more you are able to hear.

— *Rumi*

I often don't and can't know—let alone control—how other people receive what I say and do, so why not stop fretting about it, or trying to engineer it? What I can control are my own intentions and my willingness to be guided by them. If my intentions are to serve others well, not to impress them, I'm doing the best I can. The rest is out of my hands. It's liberating to remember that "Who serves best doesn't always understand." When I'm sure I know exactly what I'm doing and why, it's a sign that my ego's in charge, and that's dangerous. The ego is devoted to performance, not service. Under its sway, I miss vital clues about what's most needed in a given moment, and what I really have to offer. My best offerings come from a deeper, more intuitive and responsive place than the ego. Embracing the fact that there's no way to know where or how my actions will land helps free me to act from that deeper source.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

A young woman watched a sage drawing water from the village well. Slowly, hand over hand, the old man pulled up the wooden bucket of water. After some time, the young woman left and returned with a pulley, and excitedly explained how to use it and how easy it would be to draw the water by cranking the handle. The old man refused: “Were I to use a device like this, my mind would congratulate itself on being so clever, and then I would quit putting my heart into what I was doing.... If I don't put my heart and my whole body into my work, my work will become joyless. And how, then, do you think the water would taste?”

— *Zen Story.*

Gratitude doesn't change the scenery, it merely washes clean the glass you look through so you can clearly see the colors.

— *Sharon Salzberg*
Lovingkindness

Gratitude is a way of bringing more joy into your life. You acknowledge the richness that you already have.

— *Pema Chödrön*
Start Where You Are

Common sense and a sense of humor are the same thing moving at different speeds.

— *Clive James*

I know two things to be true: on one hand, the cosmos is utterly indifferent to me, and why not? I'm no more than a grain of sand in the grand scheme of things. On the other hand, the cosmos embraces and welcomes me as a part of life's vast and glorious whole. It feels as if my life, your life, all life is upheld with something akin to unconditional love.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

When a medical emergency took Tomas Merton out of the cloister into town, he later wrote: “In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut ... I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all these people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of self-isolation in a special world... This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud.... There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun. ... If only we could see each other that way all the time. There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed.”

— *Thomas Merton*
Trappist Monk

Gratitude is not passive; it is an active practice of noticing, of honoring, of refusing to take life for granted.

— *Adrienne Maree Brown*
Emergent Strategy

At the moment you are most in awe of all there is about life that you don't understand, you are closer to understanding that in any other time.

— *Jane Wagner*

The stars awaken a certain reverence, because though always present, they are always inaccessible; but all natural objects make a kindred impression when the mind is open to their influence. Nature never wears a mean appearance. Neither does the wisest man extort all her secrets, and lose his curiosity by finding out all her perfection. Nature never became a toy to a wise spirit. The flowers, the animals, the mountains, reflected all the wisdom of his best hour, as much as they had delighted the simplicity of his childhood.

— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*
Nature

Whoever sees the world through the eyes of love, says Milosz Czeslaw, “heals their heart without knowing it, from various ills.” That’s been my experience time and again. There’s nothing like a walk in the woods, alongside the ocean, into the mountains or the desert to put my life in perspective and help me take heart. In such places—where I’m reminded that I’m a tiny but fully embraced part of a vast, glowing web of life—the things of nature befriend me.

— *Parker J Palmer*

Gratitude softens us. It makes us hospitable to life, no matter how it arrives.

— *Francis Weller*
The Wild Edge of Sorrow

To be alive, to be able to see, to walk, to have houses, music, paintings—it’s all a miracle. I have adopted the technique of living from miracle to miracle.

— *Arthur Rubinstein*

May you experience each day as a sacred gift woven around the heart of wonder.

— *John O’Donohue*
Anam Cara

Remember to celebrate milestones as you prepare for the road ahead.

— *Nelson Mandela*
Long Walk to Freedom

The great enamorment is the universe’s love-in-action, calling us to live as conscious ancestors serving future generations

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

Once when I was a teenager, my father and I were standing in line to buy tickets for the circus. Finally, there was only one other family between us and the ticket counter. This family made a big impression on me. There were eight children, all probably under the age of 12. The way they were dressed, you could tell they didn't have a lot of money, but their clothes were neat and clean. The children were well-behaved, all of them standing in line, two-by-two behind their parents, holding hands. They were excitedly jabbering about the clowns, animals, and all the acts they would be seeing that night. By their excitement you could sense they had never been to the circus before. It would be a highlight of their lives. The father and mother were at the head of the pack standing proud as could be. The mother was holding her husband's hand, looking up at him as if to say, "You're my knight in shining armor." He was smiling and enjoying seeing his family happy.

The ticket lady asked the man how many tickets he wanted? He proudly responded, "I'd like to buy eight children's tickets and two adult tickets, so I can take my family to the circus." The ticket lady stated the price. The man's wife let go of his hand, her head dropped, the man's lip began to quiver. Then he leaned a little closer and asked, "How much did you say?" The ticket lady again stated the price. The man didn't have enough money. How was he supposed to turn and tell his eight kids that he didn't have enough money to take them to the circus?

Seeing what was going on, my dad reached into his pocket, pulled out a \$20 bill, and then dropped it on the ground. (We were not wealthy in any sense of the word!) My father bent down, picked up the \$20 bill, tapped the man on the shoulder and said, "Excuse me, sir, this fell out of your pocket." The man understood what was going on. He wasn't begging for a handout but certainly appreciated the help in a desperate, heartbreaking and embarrassing situation. He looked straight into my dad's eyes, took my dad's hand in both

of his, squeezed tightly onto the \$20 bill, and with his lip quivering and a tear streaming down his cheek, he replied; “Thank you, thank you, sir. This really means a lot to me and my family.”

My father and I went back to our car and drove home. The \$20 that my dad gave away is what we were going to buy our own tickets with. Although we didn’t get to see the circus that night, we both felt a joy inside us that was far greater than seeing the circus could ever provide.

— *Dan Clark*

I have few illusions, but I feel a responsibility to work towards the things I consider good and right. I don’t know whether I’ll be able to change certain things for the better, or not at all. Both outcomes are possible. There is only one thing I will not concede: that it might be meaningless to strive in a good cause.

— *Václav Havel*

Czech playwright and dissident

The dark is only scary if you forget what the light looks like.

— *Author Unknown*

Wisdom isn’t about being smart, it’s about seeing what other people miss.

— *Author Unknown*

Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal law.

— *Dhammapada*

Love is something that life in its infinite prodigality can afford. It was the failures who had always won, but by the time they won they had come to be called successes. This is the final paradox, which men call evolution.

— *Loren Eiseley*
The Inner Galaxy

What could I... cultivate in the inner landscape? What could I help build through a love of and attention to the present? The self we cultivate and the actions that live beyond us are the pedigree that surpasses mere physical heredity. What we pass on to the future is no longer simply genetic but a trans-genetic legacy, that which, as ancestors to the future, we safeguard and generate.

Perhaps one day “ancestor” will become a verb: to ancestor, meaning “to cultivate the ground of the self for the future.” The eternal ancestor of the present, always generating. What we receive from the past we can give to the future. And yet, what we give to the future we are also giving back. Reciprocity is a re-creation of our origins, an act wherein you have to acknowledge that you are both back there and that you are here, creating the future with every action.

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

Faith is impossible without awe. Awe precedes faith; it is at the root of faith. We must grow in awe in order to reach faith. We must be guided by awe to be worthy of faith.

— *Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel*

Driven by forces of love, the fragments of the world are seeking one another so the world may come to be. This is no metaphor—and far more than poetry.

— *T eilhard de Chardin*

Every living thing, but one, is fluent in the language of the Great Heart

— *Deena Metzger*
Ruin and Beauty

I think ninety-nine times and finding nothing. I stop thinking, swim in silence and the truth comes to me.

— *Albert Einstein*

Wonder is energization of relationship. To feel amazement at the ground of our existence, the planet, the still unfolding evolutionary journey and our role in it, is to develop an unshakable faith. Not faith in “God,” but faith in the becomingness of the Universe. If God is the term we use, it is God as verb. Wonder opens our hearts and allows us to deeply see the magnificence around us, and that is in constant supply. We live in an ocean of beauty. A regular practice of spiritual ecology helps to reawaken that great enamorment, keeping it central to our actions.

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

The Future of Love: Indigenous and feminine wisdom are re-emerging, and together they will bring us a little bit closer to a more balanced, harmonious world. But this is not the end goal; it is only a beginning. A luminous doorway is opening—on the other side is the future of love. It will take courage to cross that threshold, for it is difficult to leave behind what is familiar and comforting. Yet that is our destiny

— *Glenn Aparicio Parry*

Sometimes the greatest gift isn't getting what you wish for, it's becoming worthy of the wishes others make for you.

— *Author Unknown*

Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

— *Chief Seattle*

We teach children how to measure, how to weigh. We fail to teach them how to revere, how to sense wonder and awe. The sense of the sublime, the sense of inward greatness of the human soul and something which is potentially given to all men, is now a rare gift.

— *Abraham Joshua Heschel*

May my prayer be beautiful. May my remembrance, O Great Mystery, be as incense to Thee in the sacred grove of eternity.

— *Chinook Psalm*

Let us be the ones who write the new stories of a just and sustainable future.

— *Winona LaDuke*
All Our Relations

As you breathe in, cherish yourself. As you breathe out, cherish all beings.

— *The Dalai Lama*

Because of Thy Light all is illumined. With His shining, everything shines.

— *Mundaka Upanishad*

Light shines in the darkness for the upright, for those who are gracious, compassionate and righteous.

— *Psalm 112:4*

With beauty below me, may I walk. With beauty all around me, may I walk in old age, wandering on a trail of beauty, living again. May I walk.

— *Navajo prayer*

What wings are to a bird, and sails to a ship, so is prayer to the soul.

— *Corrie Ten Boom*

Praise be to Thee most Supreme God. Open our hearts toward your beauty. Illuminate our souls with Divine Light.

— *Saum*

It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without heart.

— *Mahatma Gandhi*

Each of us has that right, that possibility, to invent ourselves daily. If a person does not invent herself, she will be invented. So, to be bodacious enough to invent ourselves is wise.

— *Maya Angelou*

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.

— *Albert Einstein*

Women will change the nature of power, rather than power changing the nature of women.

— *Bella Abzug*

To share your weakness is to make yourself vulnerable; to make yourself vulnerable is to show your strength.

— *Criss Jami*

There are infinite part paths you can take. The one that feels the most true is your dharma.

— *Sahara Rose*

Forget your voice, sing! Forget your feet, dance! Forget your life, live. Forget yourself and be come.

— *Kamand Kojouri*

To be friends with God means to pray with simplicity, like children talking to their parents.

— *Pope Francis*

If you light a lamp for someone else, it will also brighten your own path.

— *The Buddha*

Listen to the air. You can hear it, feel it, smell it, taste it. Woniya wakan—the holy air—which renews all by its breath.

— *Lame Deer*

Do not fear the changes that are coming. Do not cling to what is already dissolving. Do not underestimate the power of your voice. Do not be unsettled if what once felt certain now feels unclear. The eclipse does not come to confuse you, it comes to realign you. Sometimes, Spirit must dim the outer light so that you remember how to see with your inner vision. If something falls away, bless it. If something awakens within you, honor it. If you feel the trembling of change, breathe with it. You are not being pushed off your path, you are simply being guided more deeply onto it. This is not a time to chase answers, it is a time to listen. Remember, the Sun is only hidden for a moment. Its light never dies. In the same way, your purpose may feel obscured at times, but it is never gone.

— *Grandmother Flordemayo*
Words of Wisdom

The most important thing is to hold on, hold out, for your creative life, for your solitude, for your time to be and do, for your very life; hold on, for the promise from the wild nature is this: after winter, spring always comes.

— *Clarissa Pinkola Estés*
Women Who Run With the Wolves:
Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype

Whether you worship Christ, Krishna, Kali or Allah, you worship the one light that is also in you since it pervades all things.

— *Anandamayi Ma*

I am beginning to learn that it is the sweet, simple things in life which are the real ones after all.

— *Laura Ingalls Wilder*

Your fellow is your mirror. If your own face is clean, so will be the image you perceive.

— *Baal Shem Tov*

To be alive in this beautiful, self-organizing universe—to participate in the dance of life with senses to perceive it, lungs that breathe it, organs that draw nourishment from it—is a wonder beyond words.

— *Joanna Macy*

When the light of Atman [soul] drives out our darkness, that life shines forth from us, a sun and splendor.

— *Sri Anandamayi Ma*

If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world on fire.

— *St Catherine of Siena*

The moment we choose to love we begin to move against domination, against oppression.

— *Bell Hooks*
All About Love

Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world.

— *George Bernard Shaw*

Healing yourself is connected with healing others.

— *Yoko Ono*

A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal.

— *Steve Maraboli*

What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.

— *Jane Goodall*

I can be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be reduced by it.

— *Maya Angelou*

Keep a green tree in your heart and perhaps a singing bird will come.

— *Chinese Proverb*

A leader sees greatness in other people. You can't be much of a leader if all you see is yourself.

— *Maya Angelou*

In some Native languages the term for plants translates to "those who take care of us.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.

— *Christopher Robin to Pooh*

If you live for having it all, what you have is never enough.

— *Vicki Robin*

Sadness is but a wall between two gardens.

— *Khalil Gibran*

Compassion is not an option. It is the key to our survival.

— *Matthew Fox*

A Spirituality Named Compassion

The work of social justice is spiritual practice. Every act of loving kindness is a prayer.

— *Mirabai Starr*
Wild Mercy

Justice is what love looks like in public.

— *Cornel West*
Democracy Matters

Authentic spirituality wants to flow outward and express itself in the form of justice, peacemaking, and compassion.

— *Parker J. Palmer*
Let Your Life Speak

Try to accept the changing seasons of your soul, even the winters. The spring will come, and you will see justice flowering.

— *Rumi, Mathnawi*

Revolutionary love is the call of our times.

— *Valarie Kaur*
See No Stranger

You are never too small to make a difference.

— *Greta Thunberg*

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.

— *James Baldwin*
No Name in the Street

True religion is always about awakening, about seeing, and about being willing to change.

— *Richard Rohr*
Falling Upward

The greatest challenge of the day is: how to bring about a revolution of the heart.

— *Dorothy Day*
Loaves and Fishes

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

— *Eleanor Roosevelt*

A deep bow to those who reach into the darkness to rekindle other people's lights....

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope.

— *Maya Angelou*

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.

— *Albert Schweitzer*

The road to love, truth, and justice is endless, and right now it is perilous. But every small step we take down that road honors the gift of life we've been given and helps pass it along. In that spirit, I wish you day after day of gratitude in action!

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Kindness isn't a grand gesture. It's not about saving the day or being a hero. It's about seeing someone else's pain and choosing not to look away. It's about offering what you have, even when what you have seems small and insignificant. Because sometimes the smallest offerings are the ones that change everything—hand extended in darkness, a moment of understanding, a promise that someone doesn't have to face their hardest days alone.

— *Author Unknown*

May you have the courage to speak for those on the margins, to live in the shelter of compassion.

— *John O'Donohue*
Benedictus

To myself I am only a child playing on the beach, while the vast oceans of truth lie undiscovered before me.

— *Sir Isaac Newton*

Listen with care to each other's stories, lest "a pattern others made prevail in the world, and following the wrong god home, we miss our star." If I want to play a role in turning us away from [a] dark dystopia toward a world of light, of love, truth and justice, I'm obliged to open myself to other people's reality and gut-check my own uninformed assumptions and unloving judgments.

— *Parker J. Palmer*
quote from William Stafford

The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up.

— *Paul Valery*

Love is all we have, the only way that each can help the other.

— *Euripides*

This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival. A joy, a depression, a meanness, some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor. Welcome and entertain them all! Even if they're a crowd of sorrows, who violently sweep your house empty of its furniture, still, treat each guest honorably. He may be clearing you out for some new delight. The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door laughing, and invite them in.

— *Rumi*

The essence of all beautiful art, all great art, is gratitude.

— *Friedrich Nietzsche*

The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth, dwelling deeply in the present moment and feeling truly alive.

—*Thich Nhat Hanh*
Peace Is Every Step

Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads.

—*Henry David Thoreau*
Walden

Everything that is in the heavens, on earth, and under the earth is penetrated with connectedness, penetrated with relatedness.

—*Hildegard of Bingen*
Letter to the Prelates of Mainz

Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement.

—*Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel*
God in Search of Man

When you try to understand everything, you will not understand anything. The best way is to understand yourself, and then you will understand everything.

—*Shunryu Suzuki*

Life is a hard battle anyway. If we laugh and sing a little as we fight the good fight of freedom, it makes it all go easier. I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me.

—*Sojourner Truth*

People are just as wonderful as sunsets if you let them be. When I look at a sunset, I don't find myself saying, "Soften the orange a bit on the right-hand corner." I don't try to control a sunset. I watch with awe as it unfolds.

—*Carl R. Rogers*
A Way of Being

Our individual consciousness is eternally trying to merge in the supreme consciousness. It wants to go home. It may not be an eloquent orator to tell you so clearly but that's what it wants to do. Because we are beings of immense freedom and infinite potential, and here we are caught up in the petty tendencies and desires of our mind and body. The soul wants to go back to its source. This is the most fundamental law of nature, of creation and destruction: everything must return to its source. Our body may be temporary, our minds conditioned, our consciousness a wary traveler, but our soul knows where it belongs.

— *Om Swami*

Paying attention is a form of reciprocity with the living world, receiving the gifts with open eyes and open heart.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom,
Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants

Two things fill the mind with ever-increasing wonder and awe, the more often and the more intensely the mind of thought is drawn to them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.

— *Immanuel Kant*

Critique of Practical Reason

Perhaps some part of me still believes peace is a destination, a place we arrive, ideally together. I notice how shiny it is, this belief, like a flower made of crystal, beautiful but lifeless, devoid of the dust and scuff that come from living a real day. Meanwhile, there is this invitation to grow into peace the way real flowers grow—from dirt into air, with blight and drought, beetles and hail.

— *Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer*

The Unfolding: Toward Peace

How can a three-pound mass of jelly that you can hold in your palm imagine angels, contemplate the meaning of infinity, and even question its own place in the cosmos? Especially awe-inspiring is the fact that any single brain, including yours, is made up of atoms that were forged in the hearts of countless, far-flung stars billions of years ago. These particles drifted for eons and light-years until gravity and change brought them together here, now. These atoms now form a conglomerate—your brain—that can not only ponder the very stars that gave it birth but can also think about its own ability to think and wonder about its own ability to wonder. With the arrival of humans, it has been said, the universe has suddenly become conscious of itself. This, truly, is the greatest mystery of all.

— *V.S. Ramachandran*
The Tell-Tale Brain: A Neuroscientist's
Quest for What Makes Us Human

To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust.

— *Henry David Thoreau*

People who've had any genuine spiritual experience always know that they don't know. They are utterly humbled before mystery. They are in awe before the abyss of it all, in wonder at eternity and depth, and a Love, which is incomprehensible to the mind.

— *Richard Rohr*

Train yourself to see the awe behind the obvious. Look at the world from this vantage point as often as possible. Submerge yourself. The beauty around us enriches our lives in so many ways. It is an end in itself.

— *Rick Rubin*
The Creative Act: A Way of Being

Kant said “A starry sky annihilates us as physical beings, tearing us away from the earth and throwing us into the infinite.” Something in me finds this idea unsettling and comforting at the same time. Unsettling because so often the good earth keeps me grounded in a world of uncertainty.... And yet, there is something deeply comforting to me when I look up at the night sky—on clear nights I can see something that is gloriously in motion and yet operates on a timeline much more immense and expanded than the course of a single human life time. We live in the heart of something forever and changing, fleeting and eternal.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Even a stone, and more easily a flower or a bird, could show you the way back to God, to the Source, to yourself. When you look at it or hold it and let it be without imposing a word of mental label on it, a sense of awe, of wonder, arises within you. It’s essence silently communicates itself to you and reflects your own essence back to you.

— *Eckhart Tolle*

*A New Earth: Awakening
to Your Life’s Purpose*

Marveling at the perfection of that leaf, I was reminded that aesthetic beauty is as much about how and whether you look as what you see. From the quark to the supernova, the wonders do not cease. It is our attentiveness that is in short supply, our ability and willingness to do the work that awe requires.

— *John Green*

*The Anthropocene Reviewed:
Essays on a Human-Centered Planet*

My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.

— *Desmond Tutu*

The genie cannot return to the bottle, because the inside is the outside now. It seemed so safe and comfortable inside, familiar from the beginning, And with the stopper secure, the outside was safe from the genie too. Yet the reflection was always there taunting from the other side of the glass. The bottle falls and shatters in a dream, but the noise awakens one who is always here. No words for the great carnage and death, no comprehending the mayhem that escapes. All the king's horses, and all the king's men are vainly called to re-assemble again! But inside and outside are the same among all the separate players and pieces here. I cover myself with the pieces that surround me on all sides, try to hide from the light but nothing fits together, and I see now the pain of keeping inside and outside apart. Staring into the sun in the empty heavens, nothing else is visible, hidden in the one. So I return as the shattered seeds, planted in this soil and nourished by the light. Will the dear dream of escape be when no separation is visible now? The promise of firm and orderly karma, every actor in place and clearly labeled? Not even the tiniest piece is forgotten or lost, and death as well is only an illusion here. It has always been this way, but explaining inside the dream is only more of the same.

— *Ted Gutfeldt*

The most fortunate are those who have a wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again, freshly and naively, the basic goods of life, with awe, pleasure, wonder, and even ecstasy.

— *Abraham H. Maslow*

We need mystery. Creator in her wisdom knew this. Mystery fills us with awe and wonder. They are the foundations of humility, and humility is the foundation of all learning. So we do not seek to unravel this. We honor it by letting it be that way forever.

— *Richard Wagamese*
Indian Horse

The responsibility to work hard, to help others, and to remember that your success belongs not just to you, but to your communities. Years ago, I was where you are now. Someone took a chance on me, and it changed my life. But it didn't just change my life. It changed the lives of everyone I've been able to help since then. Your success will create more success. Your achievements will create more opportunities. Your kindness will create more kindness. That's how change really happens. Not through grand gestures or dramatic moments, but through individual people choosing to help other individual people. Through bridges built one connection at a time.

The opportunity I was given came with responsibility. The responsibility to use my education not just to improve my own life, but to improve the lives of others. The responsibility to remember where I came from and to help other people get where they want to go. Each of you has been given advantages. Whether it's this education, your family's support, or your natural talents. The question isn't whether you're grateful for those advantages. The question is what you're going to do with them. Are you going to use your privilege to maintain the status quo? Or are you going to use it to create change? Are you going to build walls that keep people out or bridges that bring people together? I've learned that real success isn't about how high you climb. It's about how many people you bring with you.

— *Author Unknown*

Excerpt from high school
graduation speech

Awe is the moment when ego surrenders to wonder.
This is our inheritance—the beauty before us.

— *Terry Tempest Williams*

The Hour of Land:
A Personal Topography
of America's National Parks

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

— *Isaiah 9:2*

Thomas Merton, 20th century Trappist monk and patron saint of social activists, had the capacity to see self and world with both hard and soft eyes....The soft eyes he developed as a contemplative allowed him to see that behind the visible world there is another world, one he described in a lyrical passage: “There is in all visible things an invisible fecundity, a dimmed light, a meek namelessness, a hidden wholeness.... There is in all things an inexhaustible sweetness and purity, a silence that is a fountain of action and of joy. It rises up in wordless gentleness and flows out to me from the unseen roots of all created being...”

— *Parker J. Palmer*

The luminous and shocking beauty of the everyday is something I try to remain alert to, if only as an antidote to the chronic cynicism and disenchantment that seems to surround everything these days. It tells me that, despite how debased or corrupt we are told humanity is and how degraded the world has become, it just keeps on being beautiful. It can't help it.

— *Nick Cave*

Faith, Hope, and Carnage

When it's over, I want to say: all my life I was a bride married to amazement. I was a bridegroom, taking the world into my arms. When it's over, I don't want to wonder if I have made of my life something particular, and real. I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened or full of argument. I don't want to end up simply having visited this world.

— *Mary Oliver*

New and Selected Poems

Success means lifting others as you climb, holding tight to the truth that miracles aren't always about the destination. Sometimes it's about being brave enough to take the first step, even when you can't see the whole staircase. The magic is in the choice to see potential where others see problems. It is in understanding that the most profound journeys begin not with certainty, but with someone saying, "What if?" and someone else answering, "Let's find out." This is the truth about miracles.

— *Author Unknown*

It is not the critic who counts; not the (one) who points out how the strong (person) stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the (one) who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends (themselves) in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if (they fail), at least (fail) while daring greatly, so that (their) place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

— *Theodore Roosevelt*

William Carlos Williams wrote: "It is difficult to get the news from poems, yet men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there." Poetry is the language we use to speak with each other about what can be seen through soft eyes, the language of every wisdom tradition known to humankind.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Spirituality is about being fully present, fully alive, fully alert, fully at peace, and in that state of true awe and wonder.

— *Todd Perelmuter*

Shall we ground our lives in stores of love, mercy, kindness, inclusion and justice or shall we lean into stories that lift up the greedy, the bully, that exclude, vilify and marginalize? It feels very relevant in these times, the power of story,...and the importance of our ability to imagine something better and truer, deeper and truer.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

I believe the future is here with us. And if time is more like a gyre (whirl) than a river, we brush up against the future more often than we realize—through vision, intuition, synchronicity—ways of remembering what has not yet arrived.... the future is not a time. It is a relationship. A practice. A responsibility we take care of in this very moment.

I remember our founder, Nancy Roof—her vision, her fierce devotion, and her unwavering faith that humanity could awaken to its belonging with all Life. Nancy understood that transformation is not merely external. It begins in consciousness, in culture, in the stories we tell about who we are and what we are here to serve.

If we are afraid to listen to the future, we may miss the shimmering beauty beyond the cracks, the grace notes, and widening field of relationship ahead. New ways of belonging and creating together. New capacities to open, share, endure, and repair.

— *Rhonda Fabian*
Editor of Kosmos Journal

The Earth is generous with us—and forgiving. We can be the same with each other.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we shall begin to harness the energies of Love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, humanity will have discovered Fire.

— *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*

I had achieved everything that the world says should make us happy: I had a beautiful family, we were all healthy, and I was rich and famous. What more could I want? But I was unhappy and for a long time I was unwilling to admit it to myself. Eventually I realized that in some deep recess of my being, of my psyche, I was really screaming. And so, I was unhappy without knowing why, and at the same time I was trying to understand what consciousness is. I didn't know then that the two things were related; for one seemed to be a scientific problem and the other was a deep inner feeling....

Then it happened during a vacation at Lake Tahoe. We had a home there and were spending the Christmas holidays skiing. I woke in the night and suddenly, to put it very briefly, I experienced myself as love. It felt like an unbelievably strong and powerful love—an energy which was both scintillating white and self-knowing—and it was coming from me. This I found extraordinary, because I didn't know then that such love could emerge from me, or from anybody. And so I was stunned. Then this energy exploded, and I saw that everything is 'made' of that same love. I experienced myself as the world made of that energy observing myself, and that was mind-blowing, because I had always experienced myself as separate from the objects of my observations. But suddenly I was both the observer and the observed. It was a very short experience, but it changed my life. It gave me a taste that there is more to reality than what I knew.

— *Federico Faggin*
from an interview in
Kosmos Journal

Wonder isn't about finding answers; it's about becoming more comfortable with questions.

— *Leigh Ann Henion*
Phenomenal: A Hesitant Adventurer's
Search for Wonder in the Natural World

What are the necessary actions we can take in order to realize justice for all? And how do we find the strength to not look away from all that is breaking our hearts? The paradox found in the peace and restlessness of these desert lands, where rockslides, flash floods, and drought are commonplace, allows us to embrace the hardscrabble truths of change. In the process of being broken open, worn down, and reshaped, an uncommon tranquility can follow. Our undoing is also our becoming. I've come to believe this is a good thing. We need not lose hope, we just need to locate where it dwells."

— *Terry Tempest Williams*
Erosion

Wonder, the mental state of openness, questioning, curiosity, and embracing mystery, arises out of experiences of awe. In our studies, people who find more everyday awe show evidence of living with wonder. They are more open to new ideas. To what is unknown. To what language can't describe. To the absurd. To seeking new knowledge. To experience itself, for example of sound, or color, or bodily sensation, or the directions thought might take during dreams or meditation. To the strengths and virtues of other people. It should not surprise that people who feel even five minutes a day of everyday awe are more curious about art, music, poetry, new scientific discoveries, philosophy, and questions about life and death. They feel more comfortable with mysteries, with that which cannot be explained.

— *Dacher Keltner*
Awe: The New Science of Everyday
Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life

When you awaken you understand three things: that Life is more than you think it is, Love is more than you think it is, You are far more than you think you are.

— *Anne Hillman*
Awakening the Energies of Love:
Discovering Fire for the Second Time

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not.

— *Dr. Seuss*
The Lorax

You do not need a perfect vision for the future. You only need a willing heart and a kind attention. If you wish, take a few breaths and offer yourself this simple blessing: May I carry forward what truly matters. May I release what no longer serves. May I walk...with courage and care. And then extend that light outward: May we choose love again and again. May our world remember its own goodness. The light you seek... is not waiting somewhere else. It already lives in you—in your capacity to begin again, to forgive a little more, to open when it would be easier to close.

— *Jack Kornfield*

We look with uncertainty beyond the old choices for clear-cut answers to a softer, more permeable aliveness which is every moment at the brink of death; for something new is being born in us if we but let it. We stand at a new doorway, awaiting that which comes... daring to be human creatures, vulnerable to the beauty of existence. Learning to love.

— *Anne Hillman*

You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.

— *Maya Angelou*

Life will give you whatever experience is most helpful for the evolution of your consciousness. How do you know this is the experience you need? Because this is the experience you are having at the moment.

— *Eckhart Tolle*

A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose

No mud, no lotus: Both suffering and happiness are of an organic nature, which means they are both transitory; they are always changing. The flower, when it wilts, becomes the compost. The compost can help grow a flower again. Happiness is also organic and impermanent by nature. It can become suffering and suffering can become happiness again.

— *Thích Nhất Hạnh*

No Mud, No Lotus: The Art of
Transforming Suffering

How strange that the nature of life is change, yet the nature of human beings is to resist change. And how ironic that the difficult times we fear might ruin us are the very ones that can break us open and help us blossom into who we were meant to be.

— *Elizabeth Lesser*

Broken Open: How Difficult
Times Can Help Us Grow

The greatest victory is the one you win without a fight...The greatest power in the world is not knowledge or strategy or wealth. It is the courage to see the humanity in others and to build a bridge to it no matter the cost.

— *Author Unknown*

I often think back to my 2011 experience with Rep. John Lewis, who reconciled late in life with a white man who had beaten him bloody during his early days as a nonviolent civil rights activist. When Lewis finished telling us the story of his attacker's transformation from a KKK thug to a man seeking forgiveness, he paused and looked into the distance. Then he added a quiet afterthought, as if he were talking to himself: "People can change," he said, "People can change."

— *Parker J. Palmer*

A garden is a way that the land says, “I love you.”...Gardens are simultaneously a material and a spiritual undertaking.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

If one is lucky, a solitary fantasy can totally transform one million realities.

— *Maya Angelou*

Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you. Before you tell your life what truths and values you have decided to live up to, let your life tell you what truths you embody, what values you represent.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Let Your Life Speak: Listening
for the Voice of Vocation

The best teachers help people taste their own potential.

— *Author Unknown*

Look well to the growing edge. All around us, worlds are dying, and new worlds are being born; all around us, life is dying, and life is being born. The fruit ripens on the tree, the roots are silently at work in the darkness of the earth, against a time when there shall be new leaves, fresh blossoms, green fruit. Such is the growing edge.

— *Howard Thurman*

Meditations of the Heart

When you showed up for others, you discovered you weren't alone, that helping created connections strong enough to carry you through your own darkness, that saving yourself often began by serving someone else.

— *Author Unknown*

Every moment and every event of every man's life on earth plants something in his soul. For just as the wind carries thousands of winged seeds so each moment brings with it germs of spiritual vitality that come to rest imperceptibly in the minds and wills of men.

— *Thomas Merton*

The universe is change; our life is what our thoughts make it.

— *Marcus Aurelius*
Meditations

I...embrace the larger reality that all life, including mine, is dependent upon a vast web of being from which we arose and to which we will return. However deadly conditions may be in the visible world, these invisible interconnections are constantly working away at making all things new. There's a practice that serves me well on days when I find it hard to believe that an invisible web of life supports and sustains us. If I act as if that web is real—and treat others accordingly—then the web becomes easier to see and feel.

— *Parker J. Palmer*

Mathematics is about finding elegant solutions to complex problems. But the older I get, the more I realize life is the same. The most elegant solution is usually kindness. Everything else is just details

— *Author Unknown*

With compassion and understanding, and the radical act of truly seeing another human being, we discover the best things in life come from the moments when we chose to stop rushing, when we chose to see someone everyone else ignored, when we choose to hello to a stranger and discover we are helloing to our future. Kindness isn't just a virtue—it's a language.

— *Author Unknown*

We are standing in gale force winds, filling and stacking sandbags. We are fortifying all the protecting structures. We are keeping track of one another so no one gets lost. We are responding, doing daily things, each in according to their gifts, abilities and resources. We are remembering to find beauty and joy—because beauty makes us long to be worthy of it and because joy sustains us for the long haul. Hold fast. Love is still the strongest power. We are many and we are great with love.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

At the still point of the turning world, neither flesh nor fleshless, neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is, where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards. Except for the point, the still point, there would be no dance, and there is only the dance.

— *T.S. Eliot*
Burnt Norton

I feel that there was a wiser part of me that was guiding the [inner unfolding] process— bringing forth whatever I needed at that time to make progress. I believe we have a guide within; we are not alone but are part of a vaster reality that we do not see with our eyes but can sense with an open heart.

— *Federico Faggin*
Kosmos Journal

To leave the world better than you found it, sometimes you have to pick up other people's trash.

— *Bill Nye*
Undeniable: Evolution and
the Science of Creation

Have enough courage to trust love one more time and always one more time.

— *Maya Angelou*

The psychologist Richard Lazarus wrote, “To hope is to believe that something positive, which does not presently apply to one’s life, could still materialize.” In other words, hope is a response to problems, not an evasion of them. If optimism tells us things will get better, hope tells us they could. Optimism is idealistic; hope is practical. It gives people a glimpse of a better world and pushes them to fight for it.

Any of us can practice hope. [My friend] Emile did. He saw the same world most of us do, but instead of retreating into cynicism, he chose to work for peace, build community, and live his principles. To me and many who knew him, Emile’s positivity seemed supernatural. Temperament, experience, will, or some alchemy of all three graced him with a mind and a heart many of us could learn from. Through dozens of tearful, grateful conversations, I gained a deeper understanding of who Emile was and how he got that way. Emile pursued peace the way doctors pursue healing. If illnesses are aberrations in the body’s function, Emile saw conflict and cruelty as diseases of social health. He and his colleagues diagnosed the triggers that inspire hatred, and then designed psychological treatments to reduce conflict and build compassion.

One powerful tool he used to fight cynicism was skepticism: a reluctance to believe claims without evidence. Cynicism and skepticism are often confused for each other, but they couldn’t be more different. Cynicism is a lack of faith in people; skepticism is a lack of faith in our assumptions. Cynics imagine humanity is awful; skeptics gather information about who they can trust. They hold on to beliefs lightly and learn quickly. Emile was a hopeful skeptic, combining his love of humanity with a precise, curious mind.

This mindset presents us with an alternative to cynicism. As a culture, we are so focused on greed, hatred, and dishonesty that humanity has become criminally underrated. In study after study, most people fail to realize how generous, trustworthy, and open-minded others really are. The average person underestimates the average person.

If you're anything like the average person, this hides some good news: People are probably better than you think. By leaning into skepticism—paying close attention rather than jumping to conclusions—you might discover pleasant surprises everywhere. As research makes clear, hope is not a naive way of approaching the world. It is an accurate response to the best data available. This is a sort of hope even cynics can embrace, and a chance to escape the mental traps that have ensnared so many of us.

Cynicism often boils down to a lack of good evidence. Being less cynical, then, is simply a matter of noticing more precisely. I hope we can witness the good in others and work toward the world most of us want. The cynical voice inside each of us claims that we already know everything about people. But humanity is far more beautiful and complex than a cynic imagines, the future far more mysterious than they know. Cynicism is a dirty pair of glasses more of us put on each year. But we can take them off. We might be astonished by what we find.

— *Jamil Zaki*

In the end, the cure for numbing is developing tools and practices that allow you to lean into discomfort and renew your spirit.

— *Brené Brown*

Dare to Lead: Brave Work,
Tough Conversations, Whole Hearts

I want to live in a society where the currency of exchange is gratitude and the infinitely renewable resource of kindness, which multiplies every time it is shared rather than depreciating with use.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

The Serviceberry: Abundance and
Reciprocity in the Natural World

Encountering synchronicity is a moment of choice: do we see randomness or guidance? This decision is not merely intellectual; it is existential. As Kierkegaard suggests, it is through the exercise of choice and reflection on life's events that we shape our existence and define our being. It is in this uniquely personal choice—deciding how to interpret the event—that we participate most fully in our own development, navigating the “fork in the road” presented by each synchronistic moment. In choosing how to engage with coincidence, we encounter a mirror that reflects both the outer world and the contours of our inner life. Synchronicity thus reveals not only the mysteries of the universe but also the architecture of our consciousness....

Synchronicities emerge precisely because consciousness encounters the world as partially revealed, a space where meaning is not immediately apparent. At the core, where all is enfolded and aligned, the surprises and meaningful coincidences that define synchronicity are no longer necessary—the harmony is complete, and the dialogue between mind and cosmos becomes seamless. Perhaps noticing synchronicities more frequently is not superstition or mere pattern-seeking, but a sign that consciousness itself is more closely apprehending the central reality. As perception deepens, fragments of experience cohere, revealing the subtle order beneath apparent randomness....

Ultimately, the significance of synchronicity lies less in uncovering a definitive explanation than in acknowledging the interplay between mind and world. Whether we experience it as random, divinely guided, or something in between, these moments invite reflection, insight, and engagement with the unknown.... [They] catch our attention, challenge our assumptions, and remind us that meaning is both discovered and created. By attending to them with curiosity and openness, we do more than witness coincidence—we participate in the ongoing story of our consciousness, finding resonance in the dialogue between inner and outer worlds.

— *Martina Moneke*
The Coincidence of Meaning
Kosmos Journal

Ecological restoration is inseparable from cultural and spiritual restoration, and is inseparable from the spiritual responsibilities of care-giving and world-renewal.

— *Robin Wall Kimmerer*

We stay on the surface and never probe too deeply into how feedback from the world around us is possible, or how object and subject communicate with one another, or how awareness is able to be aware.

— *Tarthang Tulku*
Gesture of Great Love

I know in these times it is easy to feel overwhelmed, and so each day I bring it back to what is daily and human size and ask myself again, “What is mine to do”. I know we will all continue to do what we can according to our gifts and resources. None of us has to do this alone. We are not required to do everything, but we are called by love to do something—and that something is always more powerful when it arises out of who we are and what we most deeply love....let’s remember what is still soft and kind in this world. Do something that reminds you of what you love. Do something that lifts up what is tender and true in this world. Lean into what is still fierce with love.

— *Carrie Newcomer*

Call your spirit back. It may be caught in corners and creases of shame, judgment, and human abuse. You must call in a way that your spirit will want to return. Speak to it as you would to a beloved child. Welcome your spirit back from its wandering. It may return in pieces, in tatters. Gather them together. They will be happy to be found after being lost for so long.

— *Joy Harjo*
Conflict Resolution for
Holy Beings: Poems

The journey from caterpillar to butterfly is... amazing to witness.... Who would expect this large, ravenous, black and yellow-striped, crawling worm to form a chrysalis, disappear for days, and then re-emerge so radically and beautifully transformed? This apparent magic act is often used as a metaphor for the process of spiritual awakening and transformation. At first we are like a hungry caterpillar, unconsciously devouring as much as we can. At some point, the outer world no longer satisfies us and there is a natural turning of attention inward. We begin to sense and tend the “spark of inner radiance”.... As we do, a natural process of transformation unfolds. We are less identified with and attached to our old stories and images and simultaneously more accepting of and intimate with our experience as it is. This catalyzes a profound transformative process. As this happens, it can sometimes feel like we are living in a house while it is being remodeled. Like a little boy who watches in awe as a butterfly emerges from its chrysalis and spreads its new orange and black wings, at the end of a [meditation] retreat I marvel as many retreatants emerge from their mistaken identities and contractions and more fully open to the spacious and loving reality of who they really are.

— *John J. Prendergast*
The Super Chrysalis

As Eleanor Roosevelt wrote long ago, the work of renewing a world based on extending dignity to every being on the planet begins in small places, close to home.

— *Jacqueline Novogratz*
Manifesto for a Moral Revolution:
Practices to Build a Better World

Driven by forces of love, the fragments of the world are seeking one another so the world may come to be. This is no metaphor—and far more than poetry.

— *Teilhard de Chardin*

When we choose to be kind, especially when it's hard for us, especially when we have to sacrifice something we want or need, it creates something beautiful in the world. It's like planting seeds that grow into flowers we never expected to see. We help people because it's right, not because we expect to get something back. The beautiful surprise is that sometimes, not always, but sometimes, kindness comes back to us in ways we never imagined. It's exactly like magic—the very best kind of magic there is.

— *Author Unknown*

We are all damaged. We have all been hurt. We have all had to learn painful lessons. We are all recovering from some mistake, loss, betrayal, abuse, injustice or misfortune. All of life is a process of recovery that never ends. We each must find ways to accept and move through the pain and to pick ourselves back up. For each pang of grief, depression, doubt or despair there is an inverse toward renewal coming to you in time. Each tragedy is an announcement that some good will indeed come in time. Be patient with yourself.

— *Bryant McGill*

Simple Reminders: Inspiration
for Living Your Best Life

When we surrender our focus to repetitive scenes of violence, or default to leaning on AI or social media for answers, we risk losing something precious: our sovereignty of mind—the ability to choose where and how we place our attention.

— *R. Fabian*

Kosmos Journal

Being loving does not mean we will not be betrayed. Love helps us face betrayal without losing heart. And it renews our spirit so we can love again.

— *BellHooks*

All About Love: New Visions

In my research on AI, I was struck... [by the] insight that a major irruptive element of this new integral consciousness has to do with our relationship to time. This is not so much a different conception of time, but the lived experience of... “time freedom....” This [means] that as well as including clock time, “time freedom” involves all other non-measurable dimensions of time, such as mutation, discontinuity, and the unity of past, present and future. When all these are experienced integratively, the world becomes transparent, a four-dimensional reality—an awakening to a consciousness of the Whole. It is worth quoting...what Jean Gebser wrote with such prescience some seventy years ago: “This new spiritual reality is without question our only security through which the threat of material destruction can be averted. It’s realization alone seems to guarantee man’s continuing existence in the face of the powers of technology, rationality and chaotic emotion. If our consciousness, that is, the individual person’s awareness, vigilance, and clarity of vision, cannot master the new reality and make possible its realization, then the prophets of doom will have been correct. Other alternatives are an illusion; consequently, great demands are placed on us, and each one of us have been given a grave responsibility, not merely to survey but to actually traverse the path opening before us.”

— *Steve Brett*
Living with Uncertainty:
Symbiogenesis, AI and the Human

We would win, I thought steadily, if not in human guise then in another, for love was something that life in its infinite prodigality could afford. It was the failures who had always won, but by the time they won they had come to be called successes. This is the final paradox, which men call evolution.

— *Loren Eiseley*
The Inner Galaxy

Wonder is energization of relationship. To feel amazement at the ground of our existence, the planet, the still unfolding evolutionary journey and our role in it, is to develop an unshakable faith. Not faith in “God,” but faith in the becomingness of the Universe. If God is the term we use, it is God as verb. Wonder opens our hearts and allows us to deeply see the magnificence around us, and that is in constant supply. We live in an ocean of beauty. A regular practice of spiritual ecology helps to reawaken that great enamorment, keeping it central to our actions.

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

The Great Enamorment: Becoming
Conscious Ancestors of Life

I want you to want to be exactly who you are: a true human person doing their best to show up for this fleeting life with a measure of grace, with kindness and a sense of humor, with curiosity and a willingness to not have all the answers, with reverence for life.... Walk the path of the ordinary mystic,... cultivate a gaze of wonder and step onto the road. Keep walking. Rest up, and walk again. Fall down, get up, walk on. Pay attention to the landscape. To the ways it changes and the ways it stays the same. Be alert to surprises and turn with the turning of the seasons. Honor your body, train your mind, and keep your heart open against all odds. Say yes to what is, even when it is uncomfortable or embarrassing or heartbreaking. Hurl your handful of yes into the treetops and then lift your face as the rain of yes drops its grace all over you, all around you, and settles deep inside you.

— *Mirabai Starr*

Everything in Nature contains all the powers of Nature.
Everything is made of one hidden stuff.

— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

A few] concepts...began to generate the psychic energy within me to deal with... the larger crisis of my society,...“a radical discontinuity between the Earth and the human.” The interiority of all things The psychic “enfolding” of the universe as complementary to its actual physical unfolding....The interiority that is present from the very beginning in the universe didn’t simply give rise to my own; it is co-existent with my own.

The capacity of the human for seeing more deeply and the power of reflexive consciousness. We only have to see more deeply the remarkable emergence around us to understand that the same powers that brought this into being exist within and around us, supporting us. As a basis for faith, it is both tangible and mysterious. We can reach out and touch the rough trunk of an oak with a sense of wonder. We can feel an affinity and love for the tree and wonder at the mystery behind that capacity, that it should exist within us at all. That the self-organizing dynamics of the universe could bring this power of contemplation into existence is a source of amazement in itself.

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote that faith is impossible without awe. “Awe precedes faith; it is at the root of faith. We must grow in awe in order to reach faith. We must be guided by awe to be worthy of faith.” This is more than mere belief because it comes not out of concepts but from a sensual experience and feeling of amazement at the world....Faith is also beyond simple hope for a better future.... It is an internal state born from a connection to the dynamics of the universe. Faith goes deeper than optimism because it forms the basis for valid action in the world; [it] awakens us to the time-developmental process of the universe. We begin to see that evolution complexifies over time and through that process makes the divine more and more explicit. Faith is permeated by a sense of a focal point in the future that draws us energetically forward but is also intensely present,...a focal point of convergence toward which the evolution of

consciousness moves, but it also “already exists and is at work right here and now in the deepest part of the thinking mass...” the omni-presence of love-in-action, the “amorization” that personalizes everything in the universe. I came to see how this permeating love enriched my own creativity. My own creative energies couldn’t be separated from a universe that is fundamentally creative. Fuller being is closer union. That which binds me to all makes me more deeply who I am.

— *K. Lauren de Boer*

The Great Enamorment: Becoming
Conscious Ancestors of Life
From Sacred Earth Rising Within

Epilogue
An Invitation

This book was created and offered as a labor of love. Being a retired writer, it's fairly easy for me to do this work, but alas, I have no experience in publicity and using social media to inform friends and associates of the book's availability. So any help you can offer to share this more widely is deeply appreciated.

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Thank you for your help.
Dan

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*You must be the change
you want to see
in the world.*

Mahatma Gandhi

